A Complete Story by Elizabeth N. Barrow on Page 16.

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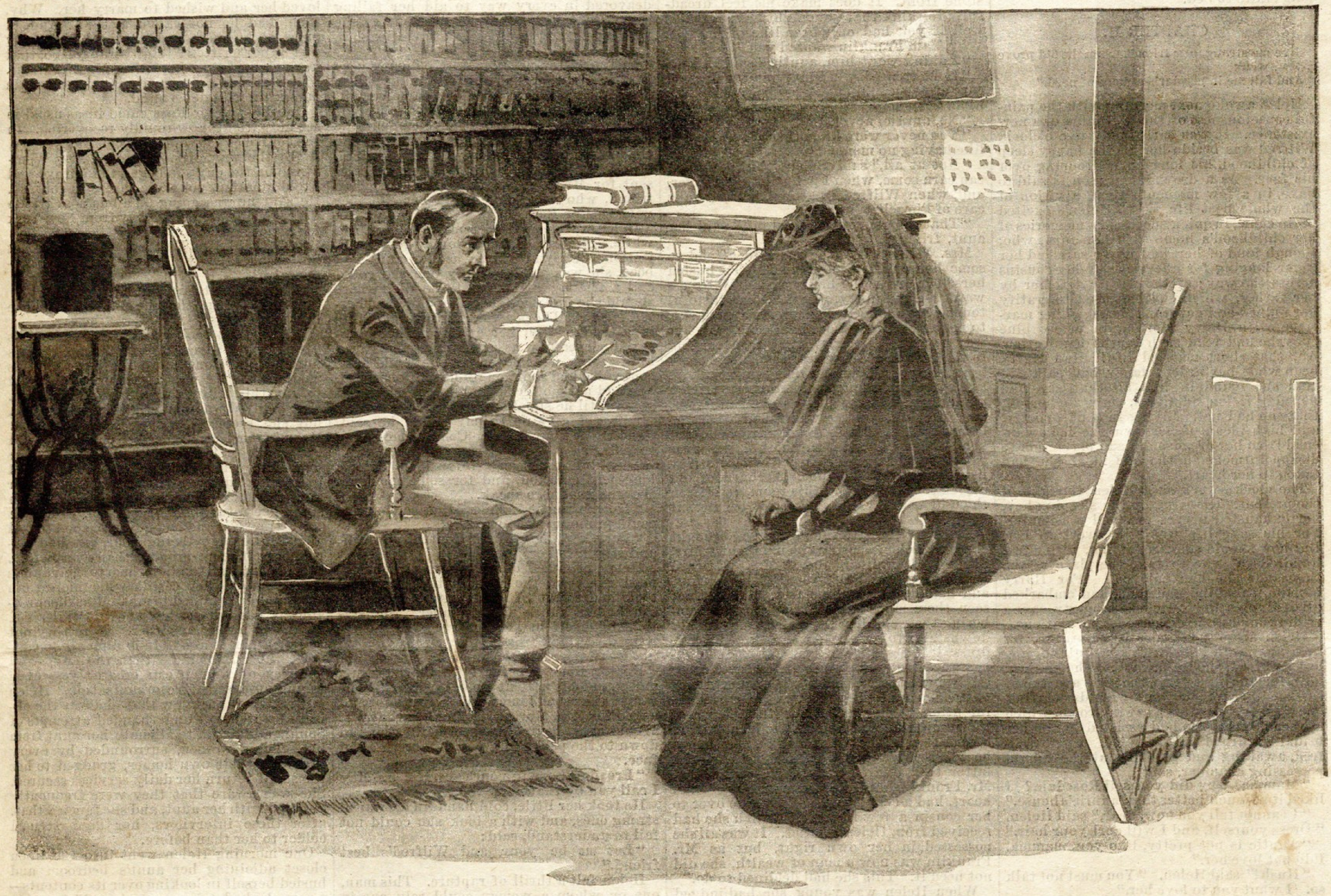

"I AM SORRY," HE SAID. "HAVE YOU NO LADY FRIEND TO WHOM YOU CAN GO?"

"CARCASSONNE."*

BY AGNES CHALLONER.

This Story is Complete in This Number.

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CHAPTER I.

"Looke into thy heart and write."
—*Sir Philip Sidney.*

IT was a raw, chilly day in late November. A leaden sky, drizzling rain and dense fog had combined to depress the spirits of all in the city of New York, save the most sanguine in temperament or those not affected by atmospheric influences. It was but four o'clock, yet already quite dark, as the train from Connecticut arrived in the Grand Central Depot. A pale lady, dressed in mourning, with a frail-looking little boy, descended from a car, and, hurrying into the street, sought a hack.

Choosing the least disagreeable-looking of the many drivers, whose importunities distracted her, she entered his conveyance with the child, after having given directions to a residence downtown. The boy, being very tired, leaned heavily on his mother's slender form, and soon fell asleep. She wrapped her black garments around him, and gazed sadly out of the window into the streets of the great city. Only half a block was visible in the gloom, save where the gas was now being lighted. The ride was long and fatiguing to Helen Morton, weary with a five-hours' journey, on which she had started feeling ill and worn with care and trouble.

At length the driver turned into the street where he had been directed, and Helen, making a vigorous effort, aroused the tired child. They had stopped before a large, stone-front house, the handsomest in the block. The street was no longer a fashionable one, however, and many residences, once private, were now used as boarding-houses. Helen, with the boy, alighted, and having paid the driver, ascended the high stoop and rang the bell. The door was immediately opened by an elderly, respectable man-servant, who said that his mistress had a headache, and would see no visitors.

"But," said Helen, "she will see us, I think, James. Don't you remember me?"

"Why, Miss Helen," said he, recognizing the tone of her voice, "you look like your own ghost, sure enough. But I was a dunce not to know your eyes. And this is Master Wilfred! Come right in, and I will tell Mrs. Wilfred."

He showed them into a spacious parlor, where everything bore the marks of costly expenditure, though curtains, hangings and carpets were faded and worn. The whole aspect of the house was gloomy. No fire was to be seen, although the day was so cold and cheerless. A faint heat came from a register in the wall, at which the tired travellers sought to warm their benumbed fingers. A dignified-looking gentleman, of about forty years, sat at a table in the middle of the room, looking over some legal papers. Seeing Helen, he rose and offered his easy-chair, with the mental comment, "Poor girl! How white she looks!"

At this instant, an elderly lady entered the room. She was rather austere in appearance, but Helen eagerly rushed up to her with the exclamation:

"Dear auntie!"

Mrs. Wilfred returned the embrace and kiss with less of warmth than Helen had shown; then, turning to the gentleman, she introduced her husband's niece, Mrs. Morton, to her friend and adviser, Mr. Wentworth. The fatigue of the journey and the excitement of meeting her aunt, whom

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she had not seen since her marriage, nine years before, were too much for poor Helen, worn with sorrow and anxiety. She turned a shade whiter, if that were possible, and would have fallen had not Mr. Wentworth caught her. Reseating her in the easy-chair, he went into the dining-room and returned with a glass of sherry, which he forced her to drink. He evidently was quite at home in Mrs. Wilfred's house. Mrs. Wilfred then rang for supper, and James appeared in the dining-room with a tray, on which were bread, butter, tea and some cold meat.

The wine and hot tea revived Helen somewhat, and after the meal was over she talked a little with her aunt; but her head began to throb so painfully that she was obliged to ask to be shown to her room. The boy, too, overcome with fatigue, had fallen asleep, and it was with difficulty that Helen aroused him and helped him up the long stairs to bed.

CHAPTER II.

> "Give me strong, *new* friends when the old prove weak
> And fail me in my darkest hour of need."

Helen awoke next morning with the painful consciousness of the beginning of a new existence. It was early—only five o'clock. Wilfred was beside her, in the happy sleep of childhood, his long curls drooping over his face. As a drowning person is said to have, in a few moments' time, a vision of the whole past life, so to Helen's excited brain came, in quick succession, memories of her childhood's home with her aunt, who, though fond of her, had never satisfied her eager longing for affection; of her cousins across the way; of the wealth left her by her father, which she had used to gratify her refined and generous tastes; of her marriage with Harry Morton, in whose blue eyes she had read such depths of affection. Ah, that short married life! Had Harry been what her ardent fancy had painted? Had she found in him all that she had hoped? Helen admitted, only to herself, that she had not. Living in books, poetry, and high ideals of her own, she had awakened from her dream of human perfection to disappointment in the one ideal she had taken to her heart.

The clock struck six. Helen thought of the present. Glancing at the sleeping boy, her exhausted nerves received a stimulus. For his sake life was still sweet to her. But how should she care for him, with a few hundreds a year to take the place of the thousands she had enjoyed? For Harry Morton, sanguine and rash, had embarked all of his own and of Helen's property, save a trifling amount, in disastrous speculations.

Helen arose mechanically to prepare for breakfast, walking stealthily about the room lest Wilfred should awake. She noticed now for the first time that the apartment assigned her was not her own old room, but one formerly used as a sewing-room, which the seamstress who had assisted her on her bridal wardrobe had occupied. Little Wilfred, awaking and glancing at the unprepossessing chamber, said:

"Mamma, why did you sell Rosedale? I liked it so much better than auntie's house."

"I cannot tell you now, dear," said Helen. "Dress yourself, and I will curl your hair."

"Auntie is not pretty, like you, mamma. I do not love her."

"Hush!" said Helen. "You must not talk so. I want you to love her."

Hearing a bell, they descended to the dining-room. Mr. Wentworth sat reading a paper by the window. Helen wondered at so early a call from him. She did not know that he was accustomed to drop in at any time, and that, since her uncle's death, he had taken care of her aunt's property. He rose as she entered and said "Good morning." He scarcely recognized, however, in the beautiful woman the white, tired object of the preceding evening, whose appearance had called forth his solicitude and sympathy. He had, indeed, then noted her exceeding refinement, but he was not prepared for the transformation that a night's sleep and a careful toilet had made in her. He now remarked the purity of her complexion, the soft blue eyes, fair hair, with teeth of ivory whiteness, compensating for her lack of bloom. Her form, too, though slender, was delicately rounded. Thomas Wentworth was an admirer of womanly beauty, and his eyes drank in her loveliness, from the soft waves of her fine hair to the beautiful wrist and hand, exquisitely white in contrast with her black sleeve. He was not given to compliment, however, but made some kindly inquiries after Helen's health and that of Wilfred after the fatigue of the journey.

Mrs. Wilfred now appeared, with a "Good-morning" to Helen and her boy. She did not seem at all surprised to see Mr. Wentworth, but went up to him and commenced looking at some papers which he held in his hand. Some discussion about them followed, when he, declining her invitation to breakfast with them on the plea of business, left the house.

Mrs. Wilfred then inquired if Helen had slept well, and invited her and Wilfred to take seats at the table, at which she presided. The room was cold, and as Helen cut up some steak for the boy, she sighed, mentally, as she thought of her little dining-room in the pretty Rosedale cottage, with its lawn curtains, its bright wood fire, its delicate china and dainty fare of new-laid eggs and cream.

Mrs. Wilfred, by daylight, appeared as austere as she had done the evening before. She looked older, her hair grayer, seen in the bright morning light. Inspecting Wilfred over her glasses, she remarked:

"Well, Helen, you've got a boy to bring up, and next to nothing to do it with. Boys are pretty risky stock. Ten to one, do the best you can with them, they'll take to women, wine or defalcation as soon as they're grown up, and bring you to grief in one way or another."

"I'm thankful I have Wilfred, auntie. I have some one to live for," said Helen.

And the child, feeling that something unpleasant had been said, yet not comprehending it, climbed into his mother's lap, covering her with kisses, and looked out from his curls defiantly at Aunt Wilfred.

"Well, Helen," said her aunt, "unpack your trunks and stay here for the present. I expect your cousins will call on you today. Mrs. Franklin has her carriage and country seat, and Mrs. Phillips a brownstone front. It does make me feel dreadfully to think that you might have fared as well if you had only been like other girls. Why, Sam Franklin wanted you."

"I didn't want him, auntie," said Helen.

"If he treated you kindly and took good care of you, couldn't you have grown to like him?"

"No, auntie, never."

"You never were like other girls. Do you like having no money?"

"Not at all," said Helen, "but perhaps I can earn some, when I get a little stronger, and, when Wilfred is grown, he will take care of himself."

"That time is rather distant," said her aunt, frigidly.

Mrs. Wilfred left the room to attend to some household matter, and Helen busied herself in arranging her own and Wilfred's wardrobe and in trying, with some tasteful touches, to make the cheerless apartment, to her artistic eye, more habitable. On her way down to dinner, which was, according to the custom of forty years ago, at an early hour, she passed her own old room, now kept as a spare one, though seldom used. Helen glanced in. It was just as she had left it, save that everything was faded with the lapse of years. The bed and mirror she had herself draped with thinnest lawn over pale-blue silk, and the carpet, with its tiny figures, matched in color. A charm of old association lingered in this room, and Helen thought she would like to occupy it again.

Early in the afternoon James brought cards to Helen, bearing the names of "Mrs. Samuel Franklin" and "Mrs. Edward Phillips." These ladies were Helen's cousins, and had been her playmates. She had not seen them since her marriage, but remembering their childish frolics, she ran quickly downstairs to greet them. Two elegantly-dressed ladies, very tall and angular in appearance and very plain in feature, arose stiffly and saluted Helen with a mixture of patronage and pity. It was their evident intention to impress her with a sense of their importance, and with the idea that, in a social scale, she was now in a position to be advised and befriended by them—the latter to a limited extent. That morning, Mr. Franklin, an illiterate man, but of kind heart, had advised his wife to make over to her cousin a few thousands which she had received from Helen's father. It was all she possessed in her own right, but as Mr. Franklin was now a man of wealth, she did not need it. This she had declined to do.

When Helen was young, she had judged no one by outward circumstances, and had been fond of these cousins, although they had shared in none of her tastes and enthusiasms, and had regarded her as "odd." Now, circumstances had develvoped in her a power, dormant hitherto—the "awful power of insight." She gazed at these women; their inmost souls seemed to be laid bare to her. She saw them as they were, stripped of the accidental adornments of fortune—poor in person, poorer in mind, poorest in heart. Never again could she take pleasure in their society, however much they might be thrown together. A chill came over her, and conversation lagged, and Helen was glad when, with cold invitations to call on them, they withdrew.

Society, in America, is composed of many different circles. When a person, through change of circumstances, loses caste in one of these, another, perhaps more congenial, will receive him with open arms. Helen, as yet, was unaware of this. Her powers and capabilities were dormant within her. She felt that, to her aunt and cousins, according to their estimates, she was lowered by loss of money—almost dishonored. She had never been elated by the possession of wealth, as it had been hers by inheritance, and not by any industrial effort or the reward and product of any talent of her own. Neither was she responsible for its loss, for this was due to the mistakes of her husband. Was a woman's individuality to count for nothing in New York, and is she merely a creature whose position is made or unmade by the wealth won or lost by father or husband? As she looked back and thought of the pure affection with which she had married, uninfluenced by worldly considerations, she felt that this was a hard return. Her cousins, marrying for money, with little or no affection to hallow the bond, were respected by society in doing so—for acts which she abhorred.

CHAPTER III.

Life passed drearily at Mrs. Wilfred's house for months. Helen found much to do in the care of little Wilfred, a delicate boy from his birth. He had many illnesses, which demanded from his mother unremitting care and much confinement. She had little to distract her attention from him. Mr. Wentworth, indeed, occasionally stopped to chat with her about books in which they were mutually interested, for he was a man of literary tastes, or to make some kindly inquiry for Wilfred's health.

Mrs. Wilfred continually lamented Helen's loss of fortune, yet whenever Helen spoke of attempting to earn some addition to her narrow income she expressed herself unfavorably of the plan, whatever it might be. Helen had lost caste in having lost her money. She would lose more if she attempted to earn it in any way, in her aunt's conventional opinion. Helen hoped that her aunt's objections were based on the ground of her usefulness to her, for she endeavored in every way to aid her failing strength, and she clung, dependent as she was by nature, to this tie of relationship, frail as it was.

In the latter part of March, during very cold weather, accompanied by high winds, Mrs. Wilfred took cold and became very ill with pneumonia. Helen attended her night and day. One of the best physicians in the city was called in, and he informed Helen that her aunt's condition was very critical. Mrs. Wilfred herself became alarmed, and sent for Mr. Wentworth and a gentleman friend, who were closeted in her chamber with Doctor Ross.

Helen was desired to remain below for a while. She sat in the parlor, a prey to dejection. Unsympathetic as her aunt had been, she was still the only one she could call a friend; and should she die, where should she find shelter for her child and herself? She had been awake for several nights in attendance on her aunt, and her overtaxed nerves now asserted themselves in a fit of crying, which even yet she would have controlled had she thought herself observed. She had not noticed Mr. Wentworth's footsteps until he stood beside her.

"Do not give up so, my child," he said. "Let me be your friend. Come to me in any trouble."

The kind tones only intensified Helen's long-pent emotion, and for some moments she was unable to speak.

"How is auntie?" she said, as soon as she could pronounce the words.

"Very low," he said. "Control yourself, and return to her."

Helen, ashamed of giving way in time of need, ran from the room, bathed her face, took a draught of cold water, and then sought her aunt's sick-chamber. She stationed herself by her side, received the minute directions from Doctor Ross, and did not leave the room that night.

Doctor Ross came early in the morning, and found his patient no better. While he was in the room James came to the door and asked for Mrs. Morton, telling her that Mr. Wentworth desired to see her. She ran down to the parlor and met him with a sad face.

"I read no hope in your eyes, Helen. May I call you by that name?"

He took her little, cold hands in his warm, strong ones, and with a look she could not fail to understand, said:

"Let *me* be your and Wilfred's best friend."

Helen felt a thrill of rapture. This man, one on whom a woman could rely, one in whom she could find the strength she lacked—in whom her aunt had confided for so many years, and of whose integrity and trustworthiness she had often spoken—loved her. Had any man more the confidence of the community than Thomas Wentworth? Was not his name a synonym for probity and uprightness in business, and was he not tender and gentle as he was strong and upright? How much more like her ideal was he than her youthful choice! These thoughts flashed through her mind with the joy his words had brought her; but not now would she listen to his charmed accents. Duty called, and she could not stay.

"Leave me now," she said, disengaging her hands from his firm clasp, and fled back to the sick-room, with a new hope to sustain here in its weary watches.

Doctor Ross looked at her in amazement. "No sleep for three nights," he said, "and you look as fresh as a rose this morning. If your nursing won't bring your aunt round, my doctoring will not; that's certain."

Helen had mental food that he knew not of, that day. No task was too hard for her, no effort too great for her to make.

Doctor Ross came in, at frequent intervals, with words of advice and directions about medicines. Late in the afternoon, he persuaded Helen to go and lie down, while he watched beside his patient. When she returned, after an hour's rest, he said that a favorable change had taken place, but he impressed upon Helen the necessity of even greater vigilance and care. Helen, hearing conversation in the hall, left the room and saw her cousin, Sophia Franklin, in conversation with James. She was insisting on entering her aunt's room. She turned and addressed Helen; an angry flush was on her cheek.

"This is a strange state of affairs, Helen, if I am not allowed to nurse my aunt! Why didn't you send for me at once? An allopathic doctor, too! I would not allow him to treat my poodle! Doctor Wright would have cured her before this. It seems to me you are taking a great deal upon yourself. Sarah has not been sent for, either."

"Aunt Wilfred sent for Doctor Ross herself, and said she had always had him when she had been ill. He told me to allow no one to see her, and it is surely my duty to take care of her when she is ill, since I live with her."

"You should have sent for Sarah and me before she became so ill," said Mrs. Franklin, and without saying "Good-day," she left the house.

CHAPTER IV.

The slight improvement noted by Doctor Ross proved to be what he had hoped—the turning point toward recovery. Mrs. Wilfred convalesced slowly. To Helen's extreme surprise, Mr. Wentworth had never called since the day that he thought her aunt to be dying. Helen had pondered over his words and looks on that day, of which she could form but one solution—that he loved her and wished to marry her. Why, then, had he not called again? And, if press of business had detained him, why had he not written? How strange, too, that he had made no inquiries for her aunt. These queries and reflections came up again and again in Helen's mind.

One day Doctor Ross came in as usual to see his patient, now rapidly recovering. In the course of conversation, he said:

"By the way, Mrs. Wilfred, I saw Wentworth on the day you began to improve, and I told him that you were going to get well. He said he was going on a business trip to Chicago, and would be away from New York for some time."

"Oh," said Mrs. Wilfred, "I wondered at his absence. But he goes to Chicago frequently."

Helen said nothing, but she thought:

"How strange that he did not write one line to me!"

Doctor Ross took great pains to impress upon Mrs. Wilfred the fact that Helen's nursing had done more for her than his medicines. He was a good man, and glad to pay this tribute to a woman's fidelity. Mrs. Wilfred was not at all demonstrative, but she seemed to appreciate somewhat Helen's services. Indeed, Helen's life with her would have become altogether more satisfactory had not Helen's cousins used every effort in their power to alienate their aunt from her. They had never liked Helen since her return amongst them. She was too attractive, and had never seemed to feel at all lowered by being poor, but had carried herself more proudly than ever before. Since her refusal to admit them to their aunt's sick-chamber they disliked her more than ever, and determined to make it as disagreeable as possible for her at Aunt Wilfred's, regarding her as a usurper. Were they not as much her nieces? It is difficult to estimate the unhappiness that the envy and jealousy of women can create; yes, even torture, to a sensitive organization. Helen felt rather than knew that she was the object of secret and underhanded attempts of Sophia and Sarah to alienate her aunt from her. These women, surrounded by every luxury in their own homes, grudged to her the small return her daily services secured. She was aware that they were frequently closeted with her aunt, and she fancied that, after these interviews, her aunt seemed colder to her than before.

One morning Helen went into the linen closet adjoining her aunt's bedroom and busied herself in looking over its contents—a care she had taken upon herself for some weeks past. The closet was large, and lighted by a window, and she seated herself to repair some table linen. She heard voices in her aunt's room, to which she paid no attention, but, hearing her own name, she stopped her work and listened involuntarily. Her cousin, Mrs. Franklin, was speaking.

"Such airs as she gave herself when you were sick! I couldn't enter your room! And men are such ninnies about a pretty woman. When I told Sam about it, he actually defended her. For my part, I see no beauty in her white face, and she's no bigger than a child of twelve or thirteen."

"Are you going to ask her to your dinner party, Sophia?" said Mrs. Phillips.

"No, I shall not. She might come. It is three years since Harry died. How I wish you *could* get rid of her, Aunt Wilfred."

Helen waited to hear no more. Had she remained a moment longer, she would have heard her aunt defend her as warmly as i was possible for one of her nature to do. Helen was excitable. All the details of the unhappiness of her life at her aunt's house came surging over her, and she felt determined to get away from a place where she was as much disliked for the very qualities for which she had once been loved and admired. What should she do? To whom should she turn? A feeling of hatred to her own sex, from whose littleness and meanness she had suffered so much, was dominant in her brain, and in her highly excited condition reason was temporarily dethroned. An idea took possession of her.

That morning Mr. Wentworth's office-boy had called at the door with some papers for Mrs. Wilfred to sign. Mr. Wentworth must be at home again. She would go to him. Had he not promised to be her friend? Had he not indeed wished to ask her to marry him? Why had she not paused to listen to him then? She started up, put on her bonnet, and, rushing into the street, walked rapidly in the direction of Mr. Wentworth's office. At the first crossing she met little Wilfred trundling his hoop, his curls flying, a bright color in his cheeks. At sight of him she hesitated, stooped and kissed him.

"Oh, mamma, I don't want to go home

Cousin Franklin is there! She says little boys are naughty."

Helen decided to go on.

"Run home," she said, "I will come very soon."

She hurried on and turned into Broadway with a palpitating heart. She ascended some steps, saw the name of

THOMAS WENTWORTH.

on a sign by a door, knocked, and was admitted by the office-boy, who was just going out. He pointed to an inner room, where he said she would find Mr. Wentworth. She entered, flushed, excited.

Mr. Wentworth was seated at his desk, looking colder and graver than she had ever seen him. He was the legal adviser of many women, and it was no uncommon thing for them to visit his office, but he looked up in surprise to see Helen.

"Good morning, Mrs. Morton," he said. "Please be seated."

Helen took the offered chair.

"I—I—am so unhappy," she faltered. "Oh, what can I do?"

"I am sorry," he said, in formal phrase, devoid of warmth or feeling. "Have you no—lady—friend—to whom you can go?"

The icy manner, the suggestion, the shock of it all, brought back Helen's reason. A burning flush dyed her cheeks, mounting to the roots of her hair.

"I will go," she said.

She drew her veil over her face and went quickly into the street. How she got home she never knew. She succeeded in gaining her room, however, when she fell to the floor. James was passing through the hall, and seeing what had happened, he tenderly lifted "Miss Helen," as he always called her, to the bed, and alarmed Mrs. Wilfred, who sent for Doctor Ross.

The doctor ordered perfect quiet, as he feared a brain-fever. Long watching, sorrow, anxiety and excitement had done their work. A complete nervous prostration followed. Doctor Ross attended her with kind and watchful care. She needed little done for her, only rest, quiet, a shaded room, and no excitement. Doctor Ross felt sure that her fine constitution would triumph. Aunt Wilfred was not yet strong, but she visited the sick-room with anxious care. She never made any demonstrations of affection, but she took much notice of Wilfred, and said that "he did seem different from other boys."

One day, James announced Mrs. Franklin, and Mrs. Wilfred asked Helen if she would see her, but she became quite excited, and begged that she should not enter her room. After that her name was not mentioned. That night Aunt Wilfred was combing Helen's long curls with a gentle hand.

"You *are* fond of me, auntie, I do believe," said Helen.

Aunt Wilfred made no reply, but kissed her forehead.

"I have something to tell you, Helen," she said. "You remember the day I was so ill?"

"Remember it?" said Helen. "I wish I could forget it."

"I made my will that day, and left all I had to you, Helen. You and Wilfred will be well cared for. All my investments are good, and my real estate has become very valuable. Thomas Wentworth drew up the will, and Doctor Ross and a friend of his witnessed it."

"Oh, auntie, you cared for me, then! How grateful I am! I wish I had known before that you care for me! Let me think. I begin to understand some strange things now—things I never thought of before. The day you made your will was the day Mr. Wentworth thought you dying! That day he spoke to me and asked to be my best friend. I see it all now, and how he changed and repulsed me when you recovered. I loathe him now! I want no one but Wilfred and you, auntie. I think in New York almost all are mercenary."

Helen was getting excited. Aunt Wilfred begged her to talk no more, and gave her some quieting medicine, but in spite of it she passed a restless night. Another ideal gone! Was there no faith in man or woman? Yes, Aunt Wilfred, cold as she had seemed, had a heart. But how had she been deceived in Mr. Wentworth! Yet every one said he was a good man. So he was, she supposed. No flaw had ever been known in his character. Yet he had wished to marry her, when he thought her aunt to be dying, and had changed his mind on her recovery. Prudence and worldly considerations had overpowered his regard for her. That he had been strongly interested in her had been apparent, but the wife of Thomas Wentworth must possess wealth as well as personal attractions.

Helen recovered slowly and by degrees, Doctor Ross's prediction regarding her constitution proving correct. Aunt Wilfred, heretofore economical to a fault, took Helen out to drive many times, and was rewarded by seeing the bloom come back to her pale cheeks.

One day she said:

"Perhaps you might like your old room, Helen. We do not need it for guests."

And Helen slept again within its dainty draperies.

One day, she went to the little church from which she was married. Her long rest, Doctor Ross's kindness, more than all, the change in her aunt, had combined to render her frame of mind happier than it had been for a long time. She entered into the services, and felt uplifted by them. At the close, a lady came up to Helen and greeted her warmly. It was Mrs. Hartwell, a friend of her father's, who had known Helen from early childhood. She had lost sight of her during her married life, but had lately heard her story from Doctor Ross, and longed to see her again. That she had experienced sorrow and losses only deepened her interest in her.

"My dear Helen," she said, "you must come to our home to-morrow evening. We are to have the first meeting, this autumn, of our literary society. We need you in it."

"Society does not want me," said Helen, "I have no money, now, to speak of."

Mrs. Hartwell smiled.

"Don't accuse every one of mercenary motives. Philadelphia would welcome you to her best society, because you are descended from Governor Winthrop. Boston may yet be proud of you, if you do what you can do, in a literary way. Why, I met your old teacher, Professor Winslow, the other day. He said you had fine natural abilities, fine education, and he was sure that you could make good use of your pen. Even here we have our literary world—a world entirely different from that in which your cousins move. We have artists, literary men and women, members of Sorosis, philanthropists—any who have brains or hearts are welcome, in this circle, if of good moral character. Money is *not* the 'one thing needful.'"

It is said that troubles never come singly; neither do the good things of fortune. Helen had found a friend in Mrs. Hartwell just as her life had become a happier one at home. Helen had grown to understand her aunt, and to value her sincere but undemonstrative affection. Mr. Wentworth came no more. Indeed, he had never entered the house since the morning when Mrs. Wilfred's illness was at its crisis. He still collected that lady's rents and invested her money. He was too shrewd a financier to be given up for sentiment, Mrs. Wilfred thought; so she went herself to his office for advice. Mrs. Franklin and her sister had ceased their visits since they found Helen in such favor with their aunt.

In Mrs. Hartwell's handsome parlors Helen found a new world opening to her—a world not of fashion, but of intellect. She was introduced to the literary *élite*, the most cultivated people in the city. She conversed with authors and thinkers. She had a passionate love of beauty, and through Mrs. Hartwell she had access to the studios of artists, where she feasted her eyes on their finest efforts. She attempted writing, for which she had had some talent in girlhood, and devoted much time to study. In her country life she had been a "student of the woods and of the fields," and she could tell much of birds and flowers, of animals and butterflies. She became favorably known at first as a writer for children. Succeeding, too, in biographical sketches, she was engaged by a popular magazine to write a series of such articles. Her work became to her a source of pecuniary recompense. She had two ambitions. She desired to educate Wilfred to be an artist, and, if ever opportunity offered, to buy back Rosedale for a summer home. With these objects in view, work became sacred to her. Life was ennobled, consecrated. The years passed by, and she loved her work for its own sake. She became a successful author. Health and vigor came to her with the renewed happiness. Her character developed. She became self-reliant.

CHAPTER V.

I bow only to genius. I kneel only to goodness.—*Victor Hugo.*

It was the evening of one of the meetings of Mrs. Hartwell's literary society. An unusually large number of members and guests were present, as the programme was one of special interest, a brilliant young musician being expected to perform, and some original essays promised. Mrs. Hartwell was a charming hostess, whose graceful tact brought forward each novice from obscurity. But Helen no longer needed her kindly services. Happiness and health had enhanced her beauty. She had put aside her black garments at Wilfred's request, and in pale-blue robes of some soft silk with some delicate laces, she looked, in her fair, womanly prime, more lovely than she had ever done in girlhood. To-night she had been requested to recite a poem. She had chosen some verses from the French of Gustave Nadaud, entitled "Carcassonne."

"Who of us," she said to herself, "leads the life longed for in youth? And who beholds the ideal one? It is farther on—unattained."

She rose when her turn came and recited the poem she had chosen with wonderful power and effect.

"I know full well that here below
Bliss unalloyed there is for none;
My prayer will ne'er fulfillment know,
I never have seen Carcassonne."

Helen's heart was in this utterance. In love, woman's first dream, she had never found "Carcassonne." Now her ideal of life had changed. Should she ever reach her present one? At the close, as she said:

"Each mortal has his Carcassonne,"

it seemed that all in the room were in sympathy with her and the poem.

A gentleman sitting half hidden in the curtains of a bay-window was intent upon the fair orator. Her beauty, her self-reliance, her power astonished him.

"How handsome she is, by Jove! How she is changed!" thought this gentleman, as he recalled the slender, delicate woman whose affection he had sought to win. Her appearance of happiness and perfect independence seemed to pique and irritate him.

Helen had seen Mr. Wentworth, but her equanimity was undisturbed.

"How thankful I am that he changed his mind about me," she thought.

Thomas Wentworth followed with the throng of guests who paid their respects to the fair elocutionist. He hoped that, among the many aspirants for her favor, he alone might be honored by the revival of the spark of an old affection, which might betray itself in blush or tremor. But not so. Helen received him as if there had been no past, and with as perfect *sang froid* as if she had been the veriest woman of the world. Lightly extending her slender finger-tips, she greeted him as unconcernedly as if he were the last newcomer whom her hostess had presented to her. After the interchange of a few brief sentences, Mr. Wentworth retired, bade adieu to Mrs. Hartwell, and went his way. Arrived at his hotel, he entered his handsome apartments. They looked strangely dreary to their owner in his present mood. Wealth had been lavished in their decoration, but all seemed empty and valueless to him. The fire was low on the hearth, and as he sat by the flickering embers the image of a woman, good, beautiful and affectionate, whose presence might have transformed the cheerless room, came before him, and he realized, too late, the mistake of his life. He sighed, and said:

"*I* never have seen Carcassonne."

But Helen stood by Mrs. Hartwell's side and received many and sincere praises for her fine rendering of the beautiful poem. She had made for herself warm and genuine friends in a circle where her worth, her gifts, her womanly graces and remarkable attractions had endeared her to all. But she hastened away with a bright flush on her cheeks when the carriage arrived to convey her home. As she entered the hall the light of fire and lamp threw cheery gleams from the parlor. Her aunt sat waiting by the glowing coals to welcome her, and Wilfred, now a beautiful youth, rushed forward to help his mother divest herself of superfluous wraps, lavishing on her his caresses and endearments.

"Tell us of the evening," said the eager listeners, "and how you succeeded."

"The evening was delightful," said Helen, "and I was congratulated on my rendering of the poem."

She looked at the fair boy beside her, whose blue eyes gazed trustfully into hers, and she thought of his pure and loyal affection for her, the sweetest, noblest gift that God had ever given to woman, and she said:

"But I wonder that I did recite it well, for I—

"I have seen Carcassonne!"

THE END.

WILLFUL PENELOPE.*

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS,

Author of "A Conqueror of Fate," "Little Kit," "At a Great Cost."

["WILLFUL PENELOPE" was commenced in No. 48. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XIII.

To fling himself from the saddle and advance toward Penelope was but the work of a moment to Denis.

"You are hurt. What has happened?"

His voice was laden with fear, with anxiety.

Penelope had turned even whiter than she had been before. He had come upon her so unexpectedly. She tried to smile, but her lips seemed frozen, and her big eyes were full of the suffering she was enduring, which at this moment was almost greater mentally than physically.

"I have been thrown," she said, speaking as well as she could. "The mare shied, and before I could prevent it she had gone down and—"

"And you are hurt. Tell me how you feel. Good heavens! this is horrible. Why are you alone, so far from Stevenstone? How came you to ride such a distance by yourself? It is worse than folly."

While he uttered these quick sentences Denis was fastening his horse securely to a gate close by. He came back to her when this was finished.

"Can you stand? Where do you feel the pain? Give me your hand. Don't be frightened. Good heavens! do you think I would hurt you?"

"I am not frightened," Penelope answered, as steadily and as bravely as she could.

The effort to seem quite at ease with him was a tremendous one, coming at such a moment, when every nerve in her body was jarring and quivering from the effect of the fall and sudden shock to her system. She was trembling all over; but it was from this nervous effect, not from fear.

She let him take her hand passively; but at the first touch of his strong, tender fingers a thrill of comfort, of sudden pleasure, sharp, keen as fire, ran through her frame.

"I—I don't think I can stand just yet, Denis," she had to confess, as he put his arm about her and drew her up slowly. Her face blanched again this time from acute pain. "My—my right foot," she said, in answer to the eager inquiry on his lips and in his eyes.

For one instant Denis held her slight form clasped close to him. He felt the quiver in her limbs, then a sudden feebleness in the lovely young body that drooped more heavily in his hold. The thought that she was suffering was nothing less than torture to him.

"Be brave, my darling," he said, all unconscious of the words he used or of the passion that escaped him and rang in his voice. "Lean on me, Penelope. I am going to put you down again, and then I am going to examine this little foot. You will trust to me, Penelope, dear, will you not? You know I will not hurt you more than I can possibly help; but I must see how far you are injured. If—if the bone is broken," his face grew white as he said this, "I shall leave this boot on; but if, as I hope and believe, it is only a sprain, why, then, I shall know how to give you ease until I get you a doctor somehow from somewhere."

"Madge has gone for one," Penelope managed to say, with her lips ashen white. "I—I was not alone. Madge Riley was with me. She rode back to Little Winstead. I—I thought you were she when—"

And then Penelope had to sit very, very quietly while Denis took the small foot into his strong hands and passed his fingers gently but with something like dexterity about the ankle and injured limb.

"The bone is safe," he said, after what seemed an age. "Now, Penelope, be very still. I am going to get this boot off. No, I am not going to hurt you. See, I shall cut it straight through with this knife. You had no idea I was so clever, had you?"

Penelope did not smile or answer. She was in excessive pain. She wondered in a weary, heavy sort of way, whether it could be possible for one to suffer more than she was doing at this moment. The sudden joy, the intense comfort called up so naturally and so unconsciously by Denis's near presence faded away now, and only a deepening of the mental pain remained. His tender words, the love that rang out so clearly in his voice and shone in his eyes, made the burden all the greater, the task before her all the more difficult.

Ill as she had been when he had appeared so unexpectedly, Penelope's eyes had been keen enough to see the change that was wrought on Denis's face. She had no need of explanation to know only too well that her mother's fears for his future were but too surely founded, that in his marriage with Marcia he would have no happiness, that his engagement was a great, a terrible mistake.

The girl's already overladen heart shrank beneath these bitter thoughts, and the vague feeling of remorse and self-reproach which had lived with her ever since the day she had worked so hard and so successfully to drive Denis away, grew now into absolute and definite form.

It was she who had done this—she who had brought about this chapter of folly which was to end in such misery. She loved him better than her life, and yet her hand had worked the greatest harm to him, and driven him down a path which must forever be shadowed with disappointment, regret and disillusionment.

Denis, glancing now and then at the white, set face that was rigid and hard with the intensity of constraint that Penelope had put upon herself, was full of anxiety and yet of admiration for her courage and quietness. He was surprised at her self-control. It was not what his former impression of Penelope's character would have led him to expect under such circumstances.

The old feelings, however, toward her did not assert themselves in this moment. Denis forgot his anger and his contempt. Love alone rose in his thoughts, filling his being, blinding his eyes and dulling his sense of all that had happened and all that lay before him in the future.

With gentle hands and careful touch he cut away the riding boot and freed the foot and ankle, which were considerably swollen.

"No use waiting for this doctor," he said, cheerfully; and taking off his white-silk neck wrap, he tore it into strips and bound it tenderly and firmly about the aching limb.

Penelope sat very still as he knelt in the mud at her feet. A dreamy sensation came over her, a weary acquiescence to fate mingled with a thought:

"It would be good to die now—now while his heart is softened toward me and he loves me a little."

His doctoring over, Denis stood upright and looked yearningly at the lovely pale face, more lovely than ever in his sight with that wan pallor on it, the weakness of womanhood proclaimed in every line.

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"If I only had some brandy!" he exclaimed, as she sat with her eyes averted from his. "It is to be hoped Miss Riley will think of bringing some. How long were you alone before I came up? Is it time for her to be back by now?"

He stepped into the road and looked down the lane where Penelope's late companion should appear. There was no sign of the returning horsewoman or her relief.

"What you would have suffered if I had not chanced to come!" Denis said, hurriedly, his brows knitting at her evident pain. "I wish I had you back in Stevenstone village."

"I asked Madge to bring a fly, if possible," Penelope said, trying to speak and be composed. "You—you must not let me keep you here, Denis, She is sure to come soon—and—and—"

He did not answer at first—he was still looking down the road; as she ceased and sat again in silence, he said, and this time his voice was no longer tender:

"It is impossible for me to leave you—you know that very well."

Penelope colored a little.

"I don't see the impossibility," she answered, with a touch of her old spirit. "If you had not come, I should have had to sit alone. Of course I—it was very good of you. I am grateful." Penelope was floundering a little, and then her face brightened. "I hear wheels coming—it must be Madge."

Denis turned on her almost savagely.

"You surely need not be so ready to show me you do not want me!" he said.

Penelope bit her lip.

Oh, how hard it was to have to play this part, to seem always in his eyes the opposite of what she was. The very pain that this thought brought her, coupled with the remembrance of Marcia, gave her strength.

"Your temper is just as bad as ever, Denis," she said, in her most indifferent, impertinent fashion; "and really you are most difficult. Did I even suggest that I wanted you to go away? I am not so silly. I may want you to do more things for me. You can be useful, even if you are disagreeable."

Denis made no answer; he went forward, and, with a good pretense of indifference, began running his hands down the legs of the mare that had been the cause of Penelope's disablement.

Penelope, safe from the glance of his keen eyes, let her own rest on his handsome form, with a yearning that was so great that she had to press her lips tight together to prevent a cry escaping them. Oh, to be able to cling to those strong arms, to nestle close to his heart, to lay her head on his shoulder and meet the world with his love as a shield and a bulwark of protection! She waited for him to speak, to give herself time to frame her words and to school her voice. As the moments passed and he was still silent, she spoke again, with a wonderful assumption of petulance.

"I really think it is so silly of you to lose your temper so easily, Denis. Now, what did I do to make you flare up as you did just now? You are as growly as any old bear. I can't say," she finished, with a boldness that sounded very like the Penelope of Waveton days—"I can't say I envy my cousin Marcia very much. I hear she is going to be your wife, poor thing!"

Denis turned his head and opened his lips as though to say something, but the words were unuttered. Penelope drew a deep, sharp breath. Miserable as this acting was, it was safe, at least; there was no danger of hearing the love melody in his voice, of seeing the love-light gleam from his eyes while that black shadow brought up so easily by her words and manner rested on his face.

"The wheels are coming much nearer; go and see if it is Madge," she said, after a pause. "You know, Denis," with a weary shadow of her usual happy laugh, "though you think me a beast, and I—I think much the same about you—we shall have to pretend to like each other, now that we are going to be cousins, and—" Then Penelope broke off. "Oh, it is Mr. De Burgh's brougham!" she cried. "How lucky! Perhaps he is there. Yes, I think I see him. Now I shall be all right."

Denis's face flushed crimson.

"Penelope," he began, in a voice that was full of passion, and then he stopped abruptly.

The reality of everything returned to him in that instant—the old miserable struggle between love and contempt for this girl, the mad jealousy, the hot anger that was so unreasoning and so foolish, the memory of Marcia.

He turned away too quickly to see the look that flashed into Penelope's eyes as that one word escaped him. He saw nothing, was conscious of nothing but that strong sound of pleasure and satisfaction in the girl's voice as she caught sight of Harold De Burgh coming toward her. The rector sprang quickly out of the brougham as it stopped.

"I have just met Miss Riley and learned of your accident," he said, as he hurried toward her, and his tone was full of agitation. "We thought it better I should return for you and take you back to Stevenstone. There is no doctor to be had in Little Winstead, but Miss Riley has ridden on to warn Doctor Westall you are coming, and to have everything in readiness for you. I—I am too late to do anything for you, I see." Clergyman as he was, it was not possible for Harold De Burgh to subdue all natural feelings.

"Mr. Latimar has been more than good," Penelope said, trying very hard about this period not to cry. It was easy enough to act a part with Denis when she was alone with him and when she was well and strong. But now, with her limbs weary and racked with pain, her heart like a lump of fire in her breast, her memory vivid as to the last time Denis had seen her with Harold De Burgh, and the conclusions he must have drawn from that sight, for all her courage, all her pride, Penelope could endure very little more.

"I—I shall be glad to get away from here," she said, with a shiver. "It is very good of you, Mr. De Burgh. I—I will go."

She tried to lift herself, and then as the rector bent forward, she looked at that other tall form, standing aloof with the white, stern face.

"Denis—will—you," she murmured. She was conscious long enough to feel the touch of his hands. Then as she whispered eagerly and scarcely audibly: "Mother—mother—she must—not—be frightened—I—must—get—back—and—you will—ride—on—you will not let her think I—" The words died away, and the slender burden in Denis's strong arms lay still and inert as death.

A pang like a knife went through Denis's heart. Like lightning his anger gave place once more to his love—love and pity and admiration, and this time another feeling, a strong throb of remorse, as he remembered how he had held this girl to be adamant to all human feelings, blind to all that was pure and sweet and good. That broken sentence pregnant with love and anxiety for her mother was like a gleam of light across the darkness of the picture that his mind had drawn of Penelope.

The whole secret of his heart lay open on his face as he stood for this moment holding the woman he loved clasped in his arms.

Harold De Burgh's face was scarcely less white and agitated than his. The rector paused only a moment, then he spoke very quietly:

"I think I understand what she wishes. We will drive straight to Doctor Westall's, while you go and pay a visit to Mrs. Desborough, and keep her interested and free from anxiety. We must do all we can to guard the mother; she is so frail now, poor thing. No doubt Mrs. Desborough will expect to see you, Mr. Latimar. It is hardly the best moment, perhaps"—Harold De Burgh smiled faintly, as he spoke—"but you will allow me, I hope, to offer you my best wishes and sincere hopes for your future happiness."

Denis gave a great start. For one instant longer he held Penelope's slender form to his heart; the full, the utter renunciation of all joy, of all happiness that was written on his white face touched a chord of pity in the breast of the other man—pity that outstripped the jealousy, the meaner and baser feelings which were so natural to one who found himself confronted with the actual cause of his own unhappiness.

Harold De Burgh had feared these many days past that his chance for success with Penelope was almost hopeless. He knew it for a certainty now, yet he could not withhold his pity for the man who possessed that for which his heart had craved in vain.

In this moment, a crucial one to Denis Latimar, the justice must be given to Harold De Burgh that the words he spoke recalling Denis from his dream to the reality of his position were uttered from a sense of that strong moral right which belonged to Harold not only as an attribute of his profession but as a great portion of his nature.

Honor was to him the standard-bearer of life. In that one moment, though his heart throbbed with all the desires and hopes of manhood, the sight of Denis's moral danger recalled him to his duty. He spoke at the right moment and to the right man.

Even as the words died away Denis unclasped his hold about Penelope, and put her into the rector's arms, only waiting till he saw the girl's death-like face resting on the soft cushions of the brougham, her eyes closed to the world, her mind oblivious to the drama that was being played about her. Then he held out his hand to Harold De Burgh.

"I will leave her with you," he said, his voice very quiet and dull, "and I will ride on to her mother. I hope and trust there will be no cause for anxiety. At any rate, we must spare her all we can."

Denis turned away and took his horse by the bridle. As he passed the rector again, he said, in a low, deep tone:

"Thank you, De Burgh; you have done well;" and, mounting hurriedly, he rode down the lane out of sight.

CHAPTER XIV.

By sheer courage, strength of will and unbounded love, Penelope managed to conceal from her mother the truth of her accident and the extent of the injury she had received from her fall.

Denis was still sitting with Mrs. Desborough, listening to her gentle voice in a misty, far-off way, his eyes fixed on the dark path outside, his ears alert for the first approach of the girl, when the door of the sitting-room opened, and Penelope stood on the threshold.

She was laughing. Her habit was cleansed from the greater part of the mud that had spattered it, enough being left to look natural as the result of a long ride on such a day. Her cheeks were red, her eyes sparkling.

She leaned her small, ungloved hand on the doorpost, as though for effect; in reality, as Denis was only too quick to see, for support. She waved her riding-crop in the air.

"All hail to the bridegroom!" she cried, gayly. "I would come and make obeisance, my lord Denis, but I am a walking mud-heap. Mumsey, you must dispense with a kiss for the moment. By-bye!"

Mrs. Desborough stretched out her hand.

"Do you think I am frightened at mud? Come and kiss me, my baby," she said, tenderly.

Denis saw Penelope's face contract; the lines round the mouth grew hard. Involuntarily he sprang to his feet, and would have advanced toward her, but at one glance from her eyes he stood still.

He saw her pause an instant, lean a little longer against the doorpost, then rearing her head, and grasping the heavy folds of her habit, as if that would give her support, she moved from the door across the floor stiffly, with absolute agony—the man watching her could feel almost every throb of pain himself—but with only a very little difference to her usual gait.

"Oh, my darling, you are tired out," Mrs. Desborough said, with a touch of anxiety in her voice. "You have done too much, Pen."

"Stiff, mumsey, only stiff. Haven't ridden for so long, and—Denis, don't listen, please—mumsey, I have a confession. My boots are too small, and they pinch me. I am as lame as anything. I don't believe any one's vanity ever was so punished as mine."

Mrs. Desborough kissed the lips bent down to hers; the lamps were not lit, and the dusk hid the sudden pallor that, despite all her will and control, spread over Penelope's face. As she lifted herself, Denis caught her eyes bent on him.

"Help me—help me!" they said, as clearly as lips could speak. "I can do no more."

With his heart beating like a sledge-hammer in his breast, he rushed to obey that glance.

"Pride must suffer pain, Miss Pen, as every one knows. Now, if I am any judge of things, I consider you have suffered just enough punishment from those tight boots, and so"—coming forward and putting his arms around her in a way that gave her intense comfort yet horrible, horrible mental pain—"and so now is my opportunity for winning that bet we had at Waveton. You remember, you said I could not carry you upstairs. I am just going to show you I can, and two of you—twenty, for the matter of that!"

"Denis, how dare you? Mumsey, won't you help me?" Penelope made a feint of frightening him off.

"I think Denis is quite right, and I am all on his side," laughed Mrs. Desborough, only too glad to see a sign of mirth and pleasure about the young man. Despite all his efforts, Denis had made her rather unhappy and low-spirited about him as they had sat chatting during the past afternoon.

And so, for a second time, Denis held close to his heart the sweetest burden in the whole world to him. There was something strangely like a tear in his eyes, as in silence, broken only by a gasping sigh from the girl's ashen, brave lips, he carried Penelope up to her pretty low-roofed room.

He laid her on the bed, with its white, frilled pillows and draperies. Penelope's own particular little handmaiden, by name Kate, was waiting there, in a fever of anxiety, to receive her.

"Oh, sir, has she fainted? She didn't ought to have done it. Miss Riley's downstairs, in an awful state, and Doctor Westall, he says he washes his hands of her." This last in a tone of horror. Kate evidently imagined Doctor Westall's wrath to be something very terrible. "But Miss Penelope she would do it. She never do think of herself when it's to spare mistress anythink." And then Kate gave a cry of alarm at Penelope's face, and began pouring *eau de Cologne* about recklessly and holding salts to the pretty nose in a despairing sort of way.

Penelope had not fainted, however. She opened her eyes after a moment and gave a feeble, flickering smile.

"Go and see if Doctor Westall is downstairs," Denis said to the servant. Then, as he was alone, he knelt suddenly beside the figure on the bed, and taking up the hem of the wet habit, pressed his lips to it passionately once—twice—three times.

Penelope put out her hand.

"Don't—don't!" she said, almost sharply. "Denis, I command you!"

"How I have wronged you! How I have wronged you!" he answered, rising obediently. "Oh, Penelope—Penelope!"

"Go!" she said, almost inaudibly. The agony of remorse and love on his face frightened her in this moment; the full misery of what her girlish folly had brought about touched her with alarm. "Mother—please, Denis—go to mother!"

Without another word, another look, he turned and left her. On the landing outside he came upon the doctor, who had crept up noiselessly behind Kate.

"Of course—of course!" he said, angrily, to Denis. "I knew the result of such a mad act. Might as well talk to a wall as that child. Good heavens! what a will she has! Harm her? Of course, it must harm her. She ought not to have put her foot to the ground for at least ten days. I don't know that I will answer for the consequences."

"It was her love," Denis said, speaking with the utmost difficulty.

Was there to be no end to the misery that was clouding thick and fast about him? Would he ever be able to breathe again freely, and without that pain like a knife running sharply through his breast? It seemed as though old age had come upon him all at once. His limbs were weighted as with iron; his head was full of a heaviness, a confusion that blinded his eyes and dulled his ears.

Doctor Westall answered him testily:

"Oh, I knew it was her love! But even love can go too far; and, after all, although I told her the other day her mother's heart-action was growing weaker slowly but surely, and that all unnecessary excitement must be avoided, I did not, of course, foresee a possibility like this occurring. How could I? I only hope I shall not have the child on her back for a month, and that's about what it will be; and as her mother must know then—well, I don't see—"

Penelope's voice came out from her room, faint but clear and determined. She had overheard every word.

"She shall not know," said the voice, "and if you dare to tell her—that's all! And if you think I am going to stay here a week, you are very greatly mistaken."

Doctor Westall laughed grimly, but with a look of sincere affection in his face. He had known Penelope since her birth, and loved the girl well.

"A nice sort of patient I have got on my hands now," he said, passing on, and leaving Denis with a nod.

How the next quarter of an hour sped away Denis could never have told. He only realized that at last he was outside in the lane leading his horse, and listening to Doctor Westall speaking, with a sense of desolation and despair upon him too great for description. The doctor had joined him immediately on leaving the house.

"That's a wonderful little creature," he said, abruptly, as he walked through the mud. "I don't think I ever wish to meet with a better or more noble nature. She is a ray of absolute sunshine in that poor woman's life. Her love for her mother passes love—it has always been devotion. Nature has certainly been bountiful to Penelope Desborough. With such a face as hers, a poor heart might pass muster; but hang me if I think I know which I admire the most, that girl's heart or her beauty—they are equal and most unequal." Then Doctor Westall came to a standstill. "We part here, so I'll say good-night, Mr. Latimar. By the way, I hear you have found your fate! Wish you all good things. Latimar Court will be all the better for a mistress, though it will take a long time before we get such a one as we used to have. I'm a bit old-fashioned, I am afraid, but, somehow, I cling to the things I have known and loved, and to my friends of old, dead as well as living. Your mother was an angel, Mr. Latimar; I can only hope your wife will be a little like her, and she will be a good woman and a treasure to her husband."

Denis stood in the dusk and the thin falling rain long after Doctor Westall had vanished in the distance. What the exact purport of his thought was at this moment he could, perhaps, not have told—he felt in a numb, stupid mental condition, like one who has realized that all hope is dead, all need for struggle over.

If anyone would have told him the night before that it would be possible for him to have deeper, harder suffering to meet than that which had followed on his awakening from the mad act of jealousy he had committed, Denis would have thought that an utter impossibility; yet now he stood here in the dark, deserted lane, overwhelmed, crushed with a new grief, a new trouble, harder, more difficult to bear than the worst that had come to him the night before.

A casual stranger, passing and glancing at the still, tall figure, would have taken it, perhaps, for some farmer of the neighborhood lost in abstruse calculations of a financial and disheartening description. To realize that this man, whose whole form and eloquent silence were pregnant with some terrible mental trouble, was none other than the owner of Latimar Court, the rich, popular, envied Denis Latimar, would have been well-nigh an impossibility.

The picture Denis made at this moment might have been christened, not inaptly, a study of despair. Who could associate the faintest meaning of such a word with the owner of the Latimar money and estates?

There was none to propound such a question. The rain fell steadily, his horse moved now and then in an inquiring fashion, and slowly and by degrees Denis woke out of his chaos of thoughts, and braced up his flagging energy for what lay before him.

The gleam of the light from Penelope's window came to him through the trees—it was a beacon, not of hope, but of courage, of will, of determination. The memory of the girl's recent act of bravery touched his heart with a thrill that recalled him to himself as by a touch of strong magnetic force.

If Penelope could be so strong in her will and courage, should he fall so far behind her? The blood rushed to his face. As he had knelt at her feet literally, so now his whole soul prostrated itself before her.

The thought came that in such a time this girl, young and weak as she was, would not falter even for an instant. The thought was a spur. With one backward glance at the window, a farewell of eyes and heart and soul, Denis sprang into his saddle, and rode hotly back to the Court to take up his duties as a man; to carry them through, and bear his burden unflinchingly, steadily, truly to the bitter end.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 3.]

DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA.*

BY SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

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["DARBY, THE BEAR-HUNTER OF ALASKA" was commenced in No. 47. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the News-dealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

CHAPTER XXI.

RAGE, surprise, baffled hope and bitter disappointment were the emotions we felt as we stood helpless, gazing upon the brutal scene.

"Liar!" exclaimed Maxom, turning upon Mesouga with a fury I had never before seen in his calm nature. "Liar! Thief! Rascal! What do you hope to gain by an act like this?"

He moved a step toward the Tananah chief, and I thought his powerful arm would lay the treacherous scoundrel low, but Mesouga was too expert in crime to be caught napping. He sprang to one side, uttered a sharp command, and in an instant we were surrounded and confronted by a score of warriors, who brandished spears, and some of whom even aimed rifles at our breasts.

"Does my white brother call Mesouga evil names?" asked the Tananah chief, with a sneer. "Let him take heed from what he has seen, and do nothing to anger the great chief of the war-tribe. His will is obeyed by hundreds of his warriors, and if he gives the command the bodies of the Bear-Hunter and his friends shall be left to be picked by the wolves, and the white Omalik at Sitka will never know his fate."

"It is useless," said Maxom, turning to me. "If we made an attempt to escape we would all be killed. We might, it is true, succeed in killing a few of them, but before we reached the limits of their encampment our lives would be taken from us. It must be cunning that sets us free—not force."

"I agree with you," I said. "Nothing could be gained by a foolhardy attempt to fight them now. We must wait."

"Hi!" said Tahnag. "Tananah thief our master *now*. But wait."

While we were speaking, Mesouga stood sneeringly watching us. When Tahnag had spoken, an ugly look came into the Tananah's face.

"Listen!" he said, savagely. "Mesouga has eight prisoners. Do you know who they are?"

"Yes," replied Maxom. "We know too well."

"Mesouga has eight prisoners," repeated the chief. "Three are white, one is the mighty hunter, the young chief of the Kotch-a-Kutchins; four are Chilcoots from beyond the mountains. I have counted my prisoners. Am I correct?"

"Yes, of course," said Maxom, impatiently. "But why go over all this? What good will it do to tell us *who* we are? We know that."

"Mesouga did wrong," said the Tananah. "He should not have reminded his prisoners who they were. Then listen: From to-day the prisoners of Mesouga are nobody! They will live in the tents and houses of the Tananahs, and they will build the fires for the braves, and they will help the women cook the food. And in the war party, where there are no women, they shall be the women, and do the slave work for the brave Tananahs. It is enough. Mesouga's will is obeyed. He is a great chief."

When he had uttered these words the Tananah turned and walked contemptuously away.

We stood—Maxom biting his lip in mortification, Hadleigh trembling and weeping, and I muttering curses against the traitor.

Tahnag stood with his arms folded, his keen eyes bent on Mesouga, his face as rigid as though it were carved in stone.

"The chief of the great Kutchins was not born a slave," he said, and grandly did his appearance bear out the assertion.

Mesouga, who heard him, turned, and his flashing eye proved the hate he felt. He seemed about to reply to the Kotch-a-Kutchin, when, perhaps recollecting himself that it was beneath his dignity to parley further with a prisoner, he drew his great fur robes around him, and said to Maxom:

"There are four empty lodges. The young warriors who have occupied them are away. The prisoners of Mesouga shall occupy them. They shall have plenty to eat. Their own tobacco shall be given them to smoke. But let them try to escape, and they shall die! It is enough. Mesouga has said his will."

Maxom gave me a look, full of determination and courage, yet commanding prudence. Turning, he started forward toward the four skin huts indicated by Mesouga, and we followed him.

"We have no choice for the present but to obey," he said, halting before one of the tents. "Mesouga is evil enough to keep his word, but the mood may pass. Our only course at present is to seem to bow before his will, and give up all hope of escape. It is not an easy thing to do, I will admit. But our own safety, and that of the girls, if, indeed, they are still alive, demands our utmost cunning."

"It is all your fault," said Hadleigh. "If you had taken my advice we wouldn't be here now."

Maxom made no reply. Turning to me, he said:

"There is room in each of these tents for two, with comfort. In one you and Hadleigh had better sleep. In the next one Tahnag and I. The Kotch and I have slept many a night under worse circumstances than this, and in the other two the Chilcoots. Yippo seems to have been overlooked. He will be with Tahnag and me. I do not think we are in any immediate danger. We must act as if we felt ourselves safe. I am weary; you must be. Let us rest."

In truth, I was nearly exhausted. The brilliant nights of that region go far to make a man lose his regard for sleep, until exhaustion compels him to let tired nature have its way. Added to that, the fatigues and excitement we had been through had nearly sapped my vitality. And Hadleigh seemed but little better than a corpse.

"If you have any weapons left," said Maxom, "conceal them. I have a knife, but it may be taken from me any minute."

With these words he turned and entered his hut. Tahnag followed him.

"Come, Hadleigh," I said, and my companion and I went under the skins.

The interior of the hut was comfortable enough. On each side was a pile of skins, which made a comfortable couch. Upon one of these Hadleigh stretched himself in silence, and his exhausted system was soon wrapped in slumber. Upon the other I lay, spending some time in morbid reflections, in none of which did hope play an important part, and then I, too, lost myself in sleep.

Thus ended this eventful day.

CHAPTER XXII.

In the morning the Tananahs brought us food. As we sat around the fire eating it, Maxom gave me a peculiar look.

"Does it not make you feel something like a cannibal?" he asked.

I knew what he meant. We were eating a piece of reindeer—our reindeer—which had so nobly worked for us the day before.

"It makes me feel like a savage," I said. "I would like to turn a Gatling gun on these miscreants, and mow them down until not one was left."

"So I!" said Tahnag. "Tananah bad Indians."

When we had finished our meal, Maxom and I, wrapped snugly in skins—though it was not bitterly cold—sat outside our huts smoking, and watching our captors at their work or play. Mesouga was not to be seen. Scores of Tananahs were in evidence, however, and these were eating, fixing weapons of war or of the chase, mending skin garments, or playing at Indian games of chance, the favorite of which seemed to be much like our own game of quoits.

Tahnag had sauntered off, and was strolling through the camp, peering into everything that he could peer into without getting himself into trouble.

Hadleigh had complained of not feeling well, and had gone inside the hut to lie down. The Chilcoots were squatting near us, playing one of their games, which was neither more nor less than a modification of the "mumble-the-peg" our schoolboys play, the Chilcoots using a bone-handled knife that they had begged of a Tananah for the purpose.

"Tahnag was nothing less than entirely right," said Maxom. "I don't believe there ever was anything good about these Tananahs. I never knew any, to say the least."

"I am much surprised at their appearance," I said. "They are different from any natives I have yet seen. In their habits and method of living they may be like the Chilcoots and others, but these fellows are fighters and—liars."

"First of all, liars," said Maxom. "It is a common fault among the natives, but the Tananahs have carried the thing to a perfected science. *They* will lie under any and all circumstances. And steal—well, you have seen enough to need no information."

"But where are they from?" I asked. "See that fellow jumping the hurdles. He is an athlete, if ever there was one. See, he is warmed up, and has thrown aside his fur and is clad only in his buckskin coat and leggins; but he has a savage face."

"And heart. That is to say, he is cruel, untruthful and cowardly. All these fellows are cowards."

"When you spoke to Mesouga, you threatened to tell the Governor that the Tananahs were too far away from their settlements. Where do they belong? I asked you that before, but you didn't hear me."

"Have you seen a map of Alaska lately?" asked Maxom.

"Yes; I studied one well while we were on the way to Circle City."

"Perhaps you remember seeing, some distance down the Yukon from Fort Yukon—nearly three hundred miles—a river coming in from the south and east."

"Ah! I do remember it. A crooked river, starting abruptly in a great, blank space, as if the upper course had never been explored."

"Right you are. And on that river the Tananahs belong. It is called the Tananah River. The Tananahs have a comfortable place, and they know how to keep it so. They allow no interference in their affairs by natives or white men. I have never been in their villages. Tahnag has, and he tells me they have the houses laid out in streets, the more important families living in the better class of dwellings. When I say houses, of course I mean either huts made of a wooden frame and covered with skins, or a snow hut made with large underground chambers. In the winter they use the snow-houses, if at all, and I fancy their summer skin-houses are the winter houses as well, with most of them."

"But is not this a long distance for them to come from home? What strong incentive could they have to travel so far?"

"They might have one of several. The Kotch-a-Kutchins tell me that when Fort Selkirk was occupied by the Hudson Bay Company as a trading post the Tananahs frequently took their skins there for barter. Fort Selkirk is at least five hundred miles from the Tananah. But their purpose in this expedition is not trade—it is plunder. But although the evidence is plain that Mesouga's warriors are a war party, I have not yet determined whom they are after. There are a few straggling hamlets along the Yukon, and a few inland, but none of any importance until we come to the Fort. There are always a number of Indians there, although not always the same tribe. Being situated at the mouth of the Rat River, it gets a good many hunting and fishing parties from up that stream—Rats or Kotches, or some of the other tribes. But I doubt if even the Tananahs would venture into the Kotch region. Tahnag's people are valiant and intelligent. Mesouga would soon find himself in trouble if he went there. No, I don't know the object of Mesouga, nor do I know where they crossed the river. For we are on the east side of the Yukon now, and the Tananahs come from the west. It may be—and is quite probable—that they came in boats, and have left them hidden somewhere between this and the forts."

"They don't seem to improve, like other Alaskans," I said.

Maxom smiled.

"I have a book in my library in Sitka," he said, "by Frederick Whymper, who made the journey up the Yukon in 1865 or '6, I forget which. He met the Tananahs, and I have often read his description of them. These are his own words—remember, they were written nearly twenty years ago:

> "'I believe them [the Tananahs he means] to be the most unsophisticated Indians to be met with at the present day. They were gay, with painted faces, feathers in their long hair, patches of red clay at the back of their heads covered with small, fluffy feathers, double-tailed coats and pantaloons of buckskin, much adorned with fringes and beads and elaborately worked fire-bags and belts. They reminded me of the ideal North American Indian I had read much of, but never seen.'

"Those were the Tananahs nearly twenty years ago, and if you add the fur clothing they use in winter, they are the same Tananahs you see before you."

"But had Whymper *seen* any of the red Indians, he never would have likened these beasts to them. I am no lover of the red men—though Tahnag himself is a living refutation that there are no good ones except dead ones. But I have been at the council fires of the bloody Sioux, and what few Pawnees are left, and I have driven my saber through the skull of more than one of them on the field. But I never saw so stupid a lot—nor so dirty a lot—as these on the plains. To me there is a great contrast existing between these Indians and those of the States. Tahnag is more like a Pawnee than Mesouga is."

"At heart, as I said before, these Indians are cowards," said Maxom. "They are the most numerous tribe in Alaska. They occupy both shores of the Tananah River, and I believe they are increasing in numbers. Their country is more or less mountainous, and they live active lives, hunting or at their athletic games, and would seem favorably situated for a warlike nation. So they are, when the advantage is all their way. Yet, in the true sense of the word, they are not brave. They would not hesitate to take an unfair advantage of an enemy—as we have seen—and to kill a man when his back is turned toward them is a warlike act in their estimation."

"A fine crowd, truly, among whom to fall," I said.

"We must be watchful. I do not anticipate any severe fate unless we anger Mesouga, and that we must endeavor not to do. We are untrammeled, so far as our movements in the camp are concerned, and we can walk around and see what they are doing. Make sure, however, we are being watched as rats are watched by cats, and do not appear to be contemplating escape. Our time will come."

He had risen, and I followed him among the Indians. There was much about them that was interesting, but I could have wished for an opportunity to study them under happier circumstances.

As it was, acute observation might in the end serve me well, so I went where Maxom went, and putting my grief and fears for the girls behind me, I mingled with the Tananahs to observe them.

Maxom had said that the houses of the Tananahs were arranged in streets, by which I understood him to mean in double rows. But in this temporary camp there had been no attempt at order of any kind. The skin huts were set up irregularly, as if—were such a thing possible—they had been dropped from some high place in the clouds, and had remained on the spots were they first struck the earth.

The inmates of some of these were lolling about, smoking curious-looking stone or wooden pipes; others, as I said, were engaged in various occupations characteristic of such a camp.

If the positions of the huts had been selected at haphazard, the same could not be said of the site of the entire camp, though it took me some time to find this out.

On one side, as could be seen from our dramatic entrance on the scene, the way was open, and a long vista of a snowy wilderness could be had.

But on the other three sides the camp was either protected by natural formations or hidden from the view of any chance travellers. Thus, on one side only was it necessary to be unusually wary, and on this side were always assembled enough of the Tananah warriors to give newcomers as warm a reception as they had given us.

We had been travelling nearly due north when we had come upon the encampment, so that this unprotected, and seemingly inviting, side of the camp was on the south. To the westward, visible over the vast expanse of snow, was the broad bosom of the Yukon, its cold, shining water reflecting the glare of the snow in a blinding light. On the east rose hummocks, or what might be more correctly styled low hills, covered with snow, and forming a barrier through which no one could discover the camp, unless by the smoke from the fires. But the danger from this was minimized as follows: In Indian warfare, on the plains, the study of smoke is one of the essentials to a good scout. No writer has made this more clear than Cooper. In his graphic scenes on the *then* frontier, the heroes of his dramas could tell by the smoke seen above the trees whether the fire from which it emanated marked the camp of Indian or white man, friend or foe, and whether it was of dry wood—the Indian's fire that made little smoke—or the white man's fire of wet wood, that was nearly all smoke.

But in Alaska, the man who looked for smoke to locate a camp, if the camp was far above the 60th parallel, would generally look in vain, for the natives of the north, deprived of wood as a fuel, used oil or fat; whale's blubber that they obtained from the tribes of the coast, or fish oil extracted from fish they caught in the Yukon.

The method of using this was to fill a large stone jug—a rude affair—with the blubber, place a wad of moss floating on the top, and light it.

The moss floated always on top, serving for a wick until the oil was exhausted. Similar contrivances, though smaller, were used as lamps, though they were seldom needed in the latitude at which the Tananahs dwelt.

I cannot imagine how these people cooked their meat before trade placed them in possession of cooking utensils. A hunk of venison placed in the blaze of one of these oil lamps would not be appetizing. But the Tananahs were supplied with iron pots, tin pans, wooden buckets and other articles of domestic economy, purchased for skins from traders near the coast. With two or three dozen of the stone lamps blazing, and pots of boiling water suspended over them, a great quantity of meat and fish could be boiled. And sometimes, as I learned, their culinary skill went so far as to *steam* certain articles of food, making them very palatable.

But the question of smoke, leading up to fire, without which, according to our old adage, there can be no smoke, has diverted me from the task of describing the boundaries of the Tananahs' camp. I have explained the natural situation on three sides. There remains but one—the north.

Here was the safest—the most impregnable side of all. About two hundred feet from the straggling huts of the outer limits of the camp, the land came to an abrupt termination. We could hear the rumble of water long before we reached the edge. When we at last came to it, we looked down a sheer descent of twenty feet into a rushing torrent. The river was perhaps a hundred or a hundred and fifty feet wide, and the bank on the opposite side was as sheer and impassable as the one on which we stood.

It may seem strange to the casual reader that we were allowed to stray so far from camp. They whose ideas of Indian warfare are confined to the exploits of the Sioux or the Pawnees, and devils of like nature, may wonder at the stupidity of the Tananahs in allowing two such prisoners as Maxom and myself that opportunity to escape. But where would we escape to? Walk off into a vast abyss like the one before us, or wander off on a trackless wilderness of snow without food or guns. If it was death to remain, it was no less certain death to go—in such a way—and the Tananahs knew there was little need of confining us.

"This place is new to me," said Maxom. "I knew there was a small stream emptying into the Yukon below the Fort, but I never set foot on its bank before. It is a dangerous-looking place."

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"What is that coming?" I asked, pointing across the river before us, away to the north.

Four sleds drawn by dog teams were coming toward us.

"The scoundrels have been up to something," said Maxom. "They must be the warriors who have occupied our huts. Some devilment, you may depend. And yet they come from the north. Surely they have not passed the Fort. The Rats and Kotches would soon make short work of them."

The approaching teams were soon discovered by the Tananahs, and a great hubbub ensued. The air was rent with cheers, grunts and howls, and from the huts came warriors to see what was the matter, and dogs to help make the matter worse.

I had not before noticed the number of dogs. There seemed to be a hundred of them, and all howling at once to assist in the general uproar.

The sleds made a long detour to the east, to find a crossing over the stream, and we lost them up behind the hills and ice mounds. But the excitement in camp grew. Mesouga appeared, gayly bedecked with feathers and red clay, and stood waiting at the southern entrance of the camp for his returning warriors.

At last they came.

Four sleds, drawn by six dogs each, and each sled carrying two Tananahs and four young Indian girls, bound securely to the pile of skins they sat upon. Sixteen in all, and not one of them more than eighteen years of age.

"Ah!" exclaimed Maxom, wrathfully. "No wonder they choose their paths out of the usual line of travel. *That* explains it. They are girl-stealers—kidnappers by wholesale. This is the way the Tananahs get their wives and keep their tribal villages full."

"Stolen from their people—a repetition of the sin we set out to avenge!" I said.

"Yes," he said, sadly, turning away.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"The white brothers of the great Tananah chief will come to the dance of victory. They shall see how the braves of Mesouga show their joy. The lodges of Mesouga's young warriors will be made brighter by the young women of the Rats, and the young men are happy."

"Mesouga does wrong. What will the great white chief at Sitka say when we tell him his friend Mesouga is a child-stealer?"

"What does Mesouga care for the great white chief? Has not the Bear-Hunter felt the power of Mesouga? Does he need further proof that Mesouga is a chief? When will the white prisoners see the great chief at Sitka? Not till Mesouga tells them to go; and Mesouga's tongue can speak the words: 'Come; you are welcome;' but it has not yet learned to say: 'Go; we do not want you.'"

"Mesouga must release not only the young girls of the Rats, but his white prisoners and their Indian friends as well."

A sneer came into the Tananah's face.

Maxom spoke courageously—I admired him for his daring—but no words could move the defiant chief, who thought the strength of his band of warriors gave him free rein over all that part of Alaska.

"Nirzih! Mesouga wise chief; not let Rat girls go. Rat girls make Tananah braves good wives. Why great chief like Mesouga not take Kotch girls, too? Kotch girls pretty, and Kotch like to be married to Tananahs."

It was Tahnag who spoke thus. He had sauntered up to where we stood, and now stood listlessly looking at the preparations for the great joy-dance of the Tananahs.

Maxom and I looked at him in surprise. They were strange words to come from the Kotch-a-Kutchin, who was an avowed enemy of the Tananahs and all that pertained to them.

"The words of the chief of the Kotch-a-Kutchins are true," said Mesouga. "The young warriors of the Tananahs shall pay a visit to the village of the Kotch-a-Kutchins, and choose the prettiest girls to take down the Yukon to their own lodges. The chief of the Kotch-a-Kutchins has been found among white men, but his heart is Indian."

"Yes, that so, Mesouga," replied Tahnag, whose command of English was inferior to Mesouga's. "Tahnag all Indian. No love any but Indian. Go hunt with white man, take white man's furs. No love white man. Nirzih? The Kotch dance at joy-dance of the Tananahs."

"The young men of the Tananahs will be proud to dance with their powerful brother. Come!"

Mesouga turned away and walked toward the spot where the dance was to take place. This was on the level space between the encampment and the cliff on the north. The warriors were already seating themselves in great semi-circles. Dozens of stone lamps were lighted, and a feast was being prepared over them. The girls who had been stolen from the Rats were taken to the center of the ground. They were released from their thongs. The wedding of sixteen Tananah braves was about to take place.

As Mesouga started Tahnag stepped to his side and accompanied him.

Maxom and I followed.

"This is a new rôle for our friend Tahnag," I said. "What do you think of his change of front?"

"I hardly know what to think," said Maxom. "There is one thing I will stake my life on, and that is Tahnag's love for me and his faithfulness to our cause. He has had no opportunity to speak to us lately. He may be hatching out some scheme to set us free. We may trust him."

"But is it not strange that at a moment's notice the Tananah becomes his friend and believes his words?"

"It would be strange," replied Maxom, "if it was true. But Mesouga is acting a part as well as Tahnag. He knows that no matter what plan the Kotch may have, he cannot escape. A dog team would soon overtake him on this snow. I don't know Tahnag's game. We will watch and see what he is up to."

A stone jug of considerable proportions was produced from one of the huts, perhaps Mesouga's, and several of the warriors took a pull at it.

When Mesouga had his turn, he leered at Maxom, and said:

"Mesouga has a way to get the fire-water of the white men, without the help of the Bear-Hunter."

"The deuce!" said Maxom. "If that is whisky, I wish Sheakley could see it. Somebody would get into trouble."

That it was whisky we soon had no cause to doubt.

Two feather-trimmed warriors now stood apart from the others and beat a tattoo upon some drums. This was the signal—the opening of the ceremony, and the Tananahs began to chant.

At the time I did not, of course, understand a word they sang, but through Maxom I have since come into possession of the translation of some of their songs, and will insert them in the proper order, giving the translated words instead of the native jargon.

They all bent forward and backward as they sang, the sounds they made being utterly without rhythm or harmony. This is the song they sang:

"We, the great Tananahs, are assembled:
We are assembled: We are assembled:
To dance the joy-dance at the wedding of our fellow-braves;
For the lodges of our young men are empty,
And there are no more young women of the Tananahs to fill them.
So we have taken the pretty girls from our enemies, the Rats,
And they shall fill the lodges of our warriors,
And they shall cook the meat and fish for our warriors,
And they shall sew the skins that make the clothing of our warriors,
And they shall give children to our warriors,
And the children of the pretty girls of the Rats shall grow up to be great Tananah warriors.
And rule the country of the Yukon,
Perhaps be mighty chiefs like Mesouga,
And carry war upon our enemies, the Rats
And the Kotch-a-Kutchins and the Kowaks,
For we, the Tananahs, are men and warriors,
And all these others are women and cowards.
Let our young warriors who need wives now stand out.
Let them show themselves, for the wives are here to be had.
Let our young men anoint themselves with clay
And put feathers in their hair,
And put new beads and fringes on their coats,
And make new robes of bearskin,
That they may look well in the eyes of the girls of the Rats.
And let them stand out before us and fight,
That he who is the strongest may have his choice,
And he who is next may have his after,
And so on until the pretty girls have all become
The wives of brave and stalwart warriors of the Tananahs."

After this song there was a moment of silence.

Then a young savage vaulted into the center of the circle, and said:

"I am a mighty hunter of the Tananahs. I claim the first choice of the girls of the Rats. Is there one to challenge my claim?"

At this a murmur of applause swept round the crowd.

The young brave stood a moment, with folded arms, looking proudly upon the assemblage.

Then another, clad in buckskin, with a great crown of feathers waving above his head, leaped beside the first one.

"I am Delobrek!" he shouted. "I am the greatest warrior of the young men of the Tananahs. I challenge the claim of Badmo, and will fight him for his choice."

A shout of approval came from the Indians, and there was a great clapping of hands. The two rivals for the prettiest girl of the Rats squared to each other, and then clinched.

They were evenly matched, both in size and strength, and as they swayed over the snow, writhing and twisting in each other's iron grasp, it was a difficult matter to choose the winner.

"Badmo will win the first choice," I said, forgetting our own position in the interest I could not help feeling in the scene.

"I think not," said Maxom. "Delobrek seems to me to have a reserve power that will in time overthrow the other."

It seemed for a moment as if Badmo was about to succeed.

Murmurs of "Badmo! Badmo!" ran around.

Then Delobrek, verifying Maxom's belief, swung round, and seizing his opponent, put him flat on his back.

Cheers now rent the air. Mesouga stepped forward and pinned a big feather on the victor's coat.

Delobrek now walked proudly to the group of waiting maidens, and closely scanned their faces. When he had gone all along the line, he went back and touched one near the center of the line on her forehead.

"This is the bride of Delobrek," he said. "Let the fairest maiden of the Rats step forward that she may see her husband."

The girl did as she was bid.

She stood by Delobrek's side, while Mesouga pinned a feather similar to that he had given Delobrek to her fur jacket.

"Hanged if the girl isn't laughing!" I said, in surprise. "One would not think she had been stolen by the miscreants."

Maxom smiled.

"It is the Indian custom," he said. "Vanity reaches into and rules the female heart in Alaska as well as in the courts of the proudest nations of the world. No doubt that girl wept and fought bitterly when she was taken away from her home. She was afraid she would be killed. But now she has seen the flower of the strongest nation bow before her, and she has been chosen by the first winner of the wrestling bouts, and her vain heart is made glad. A warrior is always a warrior to the Indian girl, whether he be friend or foe. No doubt she will be just as good a wife to Delobrek as she would to one of her own tribe. Better, in fact, because she will always worship him for his great prowess."

Badmo now stepped into the ring again, and said:

"I am Badmo, the friend of Delobrek. My claim for the first choice of a wife was good, but my friendship for Delobrek was better. And I have given the first choice to Delobrek. And Delobrek has been generous to me and has left the prettiest girl of the Rats for me. Is there a warrior of the Tananahs who will dispute my claim?"

Another warrior, clad similarly to the first two, sprang into the ring and shouted:

"My name is Luk-luk! Everywhere I am known on the Yukon, where the brave deeds of the Tananah are spoken and sung. I have seen the match between Delobrek and Badmo, and I have laughed. I challenge Badmo, the defeated."

Stung by the taunt, Badmo leaped upon the newcomer, but Luk-luk was agile, and eluded the grasp of the unhappy man.

They stood a moment, facing each other—Luk-luk cool and smiling, Badmo panting and angry.

Then their fight began.

It was evident from the start that the battle between these two was going to be more bitter than the other.

Luk-luk soon lost his easy manner, and grappled and slugged in a truly savage way.

And finally Badmo again went down, and Luk-luk stepped to the line of maidens as Delobrek had done, and chose his bride.

This scene was repeated again and again, the exhausted and embittered Badmo now being in no condition to win a fight, and was, therefore, an easy prey.

When the eighth girl had been chosen, Mesouga stepped to the side of Badmo, and said, in a loud and swelling voice—I detected the sneer, even though I did not understand the words:

"My young warrior is tired. He should not have entered the ring for a wife until he had grown to be a man. Let him rest now and wait, perhaps a year, till he becomes strong."

Crestfallen, the defeated and weary savage walked away.

His place was at once taken by another, and the battles continued until all the girls were chosen.

The drums were beaten again, and another song began. This was short and to the point:

"The braves of the Tananahs have their wives.
The elder warriors of the Tananahs have been entertained.
Now let the Tananahs dance the joy-dance.
Let them get drunk on the fire-water of the white men,
That the joy-dance may be a success;
For we are Tananah warriors."

And get drunk they did. From hidden nooks they brought forth other jugs, and soon the entire tribe was capering about and flourishing spears at imaginary foes, shouting, singing, falling down, scrambling up again, filling the air with a bedlam of sound that was simply indescribable.

And as I looked I wondered.

Here, there, everywhere, in the midst of the Tananahs, then at the outer limits of the crowd, dancing, shouting, rolling in the most drunken orgies, was our faithful Tahnag. In speechless amazement I sat and watched him. Maxom's face was a study. I could not read the emotions there.

Now Tahnag placed his hand on Mesouga's arm, and the two drunken chiefs danced toward us.

"How does my white brother like the joy-dance of the Tananahs?"

"The dogs of white men are no longer the friends of Tahnag," said the Kotch-a-Kutchin. "I am a mighty chief and an Indian. I do not love you."

Making a gesture of contempt, as if to spurn us with his foot, Tahnag reeled away; and the guttural laugh of Mesouga showed how pleased he was.

Faster and faster flew the dancers. Now drawn together in a bunch, now scattered over several hundred feet of space. Some, in a spirit of bravado, balanced themselves on the edge of the cliff, and then threw themselves back on the snow in safety. Several times I saw Tahnag doing this and shuddered. I still believed in the fellow enough not to wish him harm. Whisky-maddened braves flocked round us, threatening us, but doing no harm. They whirled round us, drawing us into the vortex, until we could see nothing but a moving mass of buckskin and feathers, red clay and savage smiles.

Their paroxysms could not last, however, and one by one they began to drop on the snow exhausted.

It was soon over. At least a hundred warriors lay around drunk, and the others, still shouting and singing, began to eat some of the viands that had been cooked.

The sixteen brides and grooms, who had not mingled in the dance, were honored guests and served first. Then Mesouga, and then his warriors—those who were able to eat.

Tahnag did not come to get his share.

"Where is the great chief of the Kotch-a-Kutchins?" demanded Mesouga, looking round him. "He was my brother in the dance, let him be my brother at the feast."

But he looked and waited in vain. Not with the still singing warriors, nor among the drunken ones on the snow, was the chief of the Kotch-a-Kutchins to be found.

He had evaporated—melted into thin air—disappeared by some magic agency. Maxom and I were as much astonished as Mesouga.

"He is dead," I said. "I saw him dancing on the bluff. He was too drunk to save himself, and fell to his death."

A grim smile played on Mesouga's face.

"I have one prisoner less," he said. "But if the Kotch is dead, Mesouga is content."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 3.]

◆

GOOD RESOLUTIONS.

With the beginning of the New Year comes the almost universal practice of making good resolutions. All conscientious persons who have been accustomed to indulge in habits that they know are not to be approved by a high standard of æsthetics or morality, ordinarily take occasion to make resolves that they will amend their ways according to the best accepted ideas on such subjects.

It is a curious fact that the breaking of such resolutions is likely to cause as much merriment as regret, and failures to live up to the new determinations are regarded by many as huge jokes. It is a good thing to begin with the New Year to lop off some of our mental or moral derelictions and correct whatever physical shortcomings we may have been guilty of. Especially is this the case with young persons. Every year ought to show a distinct and decided advance over the one just before it. Boys and girls have every incentive to strive to elevate and develop their characters. They have the world and life before them, and it rests with them to make the coming generation better than the present and infinitely superior to the one just passing away. Young people who are now entering upon the preliminary duties of life will find it of the greatest advantage if they will select some pursuit to which they can devote whatever spare time circumstances may allot them. The girl who takes up botany, floriculture, bee-keeping, gardening or poultry raising as a special study, with the determination to make 1896 a red-letter year in her calendar, by reason of her thorough study and comprehensive understanding of the business in hand, will, before long, find herself in an independent and commanding position, able to paddle her own canoe among the rocks and reefs that line the shores of the river of life. It is a good thing to begin a new study with the new year. It gives something to date from, and an ambition to cover all possible ground during the three hundred and sixty-five days before the calendar is to be renewed. The man who makes up his mind to cut loose from all nonsense, to give up everything that sounds like excuses for non-performance of duty, and determines to be prompt, thorough, alert, concentrative, and watchful of every opportunity to make himself indispensable, will some day look back to the beginning of the present year and congratulate himself that there is in the world such a thing as good resolutions. There are very many persons who would be the gainer by a determined resolve to divest themselves of the idea that they are of such great importance. Conceit mars more characters than any other of our besetting sins. The world gets along just as well without us, and while for a little time the few may regret us, the many never miss us. When once we become fully reconciled to the idea that we are but particles in the great mosaic of creation, and that if we drop out of it there are plenty more that slip almost unconsciously into the spaces we leave vacant, we will have removed from our lives some of the leading causes of unhappiness and unrest. January, 1896, is an excellent time to prune, as far as we may, everything in the way of weaknesses and follies and set up a standard higher than we have ever before raised, and register a vow to follow the best models and methods that our most enlightened intelligence can furnish.

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BY JOHN R. MUSICK.

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CHAPTER XXXIV—*(Continued)*.

BEGINNING OF HORACE'S TRIAL.

“FLORA, won't you come away with your mother?” Mrs. Wells asked. Sobbing bitterly, the girl answered:

“Mother, if it was father, would you leave him? Would you not think it cruel if you should be dragged from his side at such an awful moment?”

“Yes.”

“Then please don't ask me to go.”

Mrs. Wells looked about for her husband, but he was lost in the surging tide of humanity.

“Silence in Court!” cried the bailiff.

The Judge opened the Motion Docket, and some time was spent in calling up motions and disposing of them. A few technical questions of law, in which the attorneys had a chance to air their legal knowledge, were discussed, then the Judge declared the motion hour over, and turning to the Criminal Docket, called:

“‘State of Missouri *versus* Horace Rathburne.’ Is the defendant in Court, Mr. Sheriff?”

“No, sir; I can have him here in a moment.”

“Bring him in at once.”

The Judge then called up some little unimportant matters, and questioned several attorneys in regard to them; there rose a little discussion, during which the prisoner was brought in. Horace was very pale, but calm and unmoved. Flora sent a boy to Colonel Hale with a note, and the Colonel, who was on familiar terms with the Judge, went to him and asked him something in a whisper, to which his Honor was heard to say: “Certainly.” The Colonel motioned to Flora; she came forward and took a seat by the prisoner.

Mr. Wells was heard to say:

“She is determined to go to the deuce,” and clapping his hat on his head, hurried from the court-room; but the gentle little mother stole into the bar and took a seat near her child. The Judge saw the act, but was too much moved by it to rebuke her.

Horace was told to stand up. The indictment was read to him, and the Judge asked him if he was guilty or not guilty.

“Not guilty!” he answered, in a clear, ringing tone.

“Be seated. Now, gentlemen, are you ready for trial?”

A moment's confusion, with some little legal sparring, followed, and then both prosecution and defense announced themselves ready. Several reporters for the St. Louis, Chicago and Kansas City dailies were present, who did not neglect the sensational part of the trial. Flora's refusal to be driven from her lover by her angry father was described in glowing headlines, and many a pretty actress's picture was used to represent the features of the outlaw's sweetheart.

Nearly the entire day was taken up in impaneling a jury. After the jury was impaneled, the Court charged them not to discuss the case with any one, or with one another, put them in charge of a deputy sheriff, and the Court adjourned until next day.

“Where is father?” Flora asked, turning to her mother, when the prisoner had been taken back to jail.

“Perhaps he has gone home,” Mrs. Wells answered.

“Mother, won't you stay with me?”

“Yes, dear.”

Taking Colonel Hale aside, the anxious girl said:

“What do you think of the chances of an acquittal, cousin?”

“We will do our best,” he answered, gravely.

“Has the man on the roan horse with the black ear been found?”

“Not yet.”

“Heaven grant he may,” she said, and turning to her mother went with her to the hotel where she and Aunt Rachel were stopping.

As a pebble may change the current of a river, so small things may turn the tide of public opinion. The action of Flora Wells began to have its effect on the public. They came to admire the brave girl who refused to desert her lover in adversity. Some thought, if she had such confidence in his innocence, perhap she was not guilty. Those who had been most firm in the belief that he ought to be hung, began to doubt, and from doubting became convinced he must be innocent.

Next morning at the opening hour the jurymen were all in their seats, the prisoner in his place, his sweetheart, very pretty but pale, on one side and Colonel Hale on the other, while Mrs. Wells sat just back of them. It was an impressive sight, and even the stern Judge was moved by it. After the panel had been called the prosecuting attorney, with his scornful lips and thin, twitching nostrils, rose to open the case.

“May it please the Court and gentlemen of the jury,” he began, and proceeded to tell what the “State” expected to prove, giving the story of the robbery and the manner in which the defendant was connected with it, all of which has been detailed to the reader. When he had concluded, the Judge said:

“Call the witnesses for the State.”

The clerk, with a list of the witnesses on the back of a subpœna, rose from his desk and called:

“Enoch Ralls, Jack Auglin, Cris Morton, John Layman, Ben Dougan, Gabriel Hart, Mollie Burton, Samuel Denton,” continuing until fifteen persons rose and stood before him in line to be sworn.

When this ceremony had been performed, Colonel Hale rose and said:

“May it please the Court, under the rule, I ask for a severance of the witnesses.”

Mr. Crompton, with an almost scornful expression of features, sniffed the air and suggested that the same rule might apply to the defense.

“We have no witnesses in the court-room now,” answered Colonel Hale.

Mr. Crompton looked about him, sniffed the air, and said that should any come in during the trial the order must be enforced against them. The judge assured him it would, and they proceeded:

“Whom will you have first?” asked the Judge.

“Enoch Ralls.”

All other witnesses for the prosecution were told to retire from the court-room, but wait within call when wanted, and Enoch took the stand. After the usual preliminary in important cases, telling where he lived and how long he had lived there, and what he did to support himself and family, he came down to the date of the robbery, and stated that he and “some o' the boys were a-settin' on the porch, and saw strangers come into town,” and then followed the pretended horse deal; and he told how two men had dismounted and gone into the bank to get a bill changed, and while he was showing Jack how well the dark-brown “hoss was quartered an' what a fine chist he had, they begin yellin' and shootin'. The defendant was ridin' a skittish hoss, which throwed him just as witness and Jack ran into each other and fell. The defendant fell on Enoch's back, and a'most knocked the breath clean out o' him. The wig and whiskers came off, and he saw his face before he had time to jump up behind the other feller and gallop away.”

“You saw his face?” said Mr. Crompton.

“Jist as plain ez I see your'n now,” answered Enoch, with a nasal drawl.

“Who was he?”

“He wuz Horace Rathburne.”

“The prisoner at the bar?”

“Yes, sir; that feller settin' thar.”

“You are quite sure you are not mistaken?”

“Oh, I know I hain't mistaken.”

“Take the witness,” said Mr. Crompton, elevating his nose as if he had completed the case and there was no further need of delay.

Colonel Hale proceeded to cross-examine the witness.

“Did the man fall very heavily?”

“Wall, he knocked me flat.”

“Did you fall on your back or face?”

“I fell on my face.”

“How do you remember you fell on your face?”

“I jammed my mouth, nose an' eyes in the dust.”

“Can a man see with his eyes full of dust?”

“Yes, ef he ain't got too much in 'em.”

“Can he see as well with any dust in his eyes as without?”

“No, I reckon he can't,” scratching his head.

“And yet you swear positively you knew the man, though you had dust in your eyes, was stunned by the fall, and his face visible but two or three seconds?”

“Dog on et, I didn't see what ye wuz a drivin' at,” answered Enoch, rubbing his bald head.

“Never mind what I am driving at. I want to see what you are driving at.”

“Wall, Kernel, I could see well enuff t' tell it wuz Horace Rathburne. I ain't got nuthin' agin him, we never had any fuss, but I hain't goin' t' lie t' save anybody.”

“No one wants you to lie, Mr. Ralls. We only want to know if there may not be a doubt as to the man you saw. There is such a thing as mistaken identity.”

“Wall, thar hain't no mistaken identity 'bout this. I know et war him.”

All efforts to shake the positiveness of the witness were in vain. Flora, whose hopes had fluctuated during the cross-examination, was in despair when Enoch Ralls left the stand. Mr. Crompton next called Jack Auglin.

This witness was better in some particulars than Enoch, though he was just a little less certain than the preceding witness. He told about the same story, and ended it with the recognition of the defendant. Colonel Hale tried to trip him on cross-examination, but all in vain, and he left the stand with a strong impression on the minds of the jury that he had told a truth.

Witness after witness testified, and Flora was in despair. She occasionally turned her white face appealingly to the Judge or jury, but usually stared at the witnesses. Such a web of indisputable testimony was woven about the defendant that it seemed impossible for him ever to extricate himself from it. His face was firm but very pale. He seldom glanced at the witnesses, jury or Court; his eyes were continually on Flora's white face. The sheriff was at last put on the stand to testify to some unimportant matter, and when Colonel Hale came to cross-examine him, he asked:

“Do you know what became of the horse which threw the robber?”

“Yes, sir, I have it at my barn.”

“What is the color of the horse?”

“A dark bay, with a star in its forehead.”

Nothing seemed to have been gained by the cross-examination. The day was almost spent when the prosecution closed, having made one of the clearest cases ever known in that Court.

Flora heard two lawyers not engaged in the case talking in whispers about the probable result.

“What do you think of it?” one asked.

“He'll get twenty-five years.”

“He'll be hanged before he starts to Jefferson,” returned the other. Those careless, idle words went like daggers to the heart of Flora.

When called upon to open for the defense, Colonel Hale rose and said that, owing to the lateness of the hour, he would ask for a postponement until the next morning, especially as he wanted to consult with his client and associate counsel, in regard to the line of defense they would adopt.

Flora did not know what he was asking, her ears were humming and her eyes swimming with tears. She turned to the window to conceal her emotion. The window was open, for the air was close and stifling. She saw two horsemen riding down the street toward the court-house. At first she gave them a casual glance, and then as one of the men on near approach became familiar, she looked closely at both. One was Josiah Hunt, her discarded suitor, and the other a stranger. She fixed her eyes on Josiah's companion and his steed, and uttered a wild shriek:

“*God be praised! He has come—he has come! The stranger on the roan horse with the black ear!*”

CHAPTER XXXV.

A STRANGE DENOUEMENT.

The prisoner so far forgot himself as to leap to the window to get a glimpse of the long-sought witness to establish his *alibi*. His act was mistaken for an attempt at escape, and a deputy, seizing him by the shoulder, pulled him back to his seat, saying:

“No, ye don't, my fine fellow. Try that again, and dog on my hide and taller if I don't put the nippers on ye.”

There was general uproar and confusion. Some one said the prisoner was trying to escape, and many who had sympathized with him, for “his girl's sake,” now cried:

“Hang him! Hang him, or he'll get away!”

Flora screamed and clung to her lover, the sheriff, bailiff and deputies demanded order, and the Judge threatened to fine some one.

Colonel Hale alone kept perfectly cool. He finally got the ear of both Court and audience and appealed for an adjournment until morning. He assured them that the prisoner had only gone to the window to look out, and that what the young woman had said was not a preconcerted signal for him to escape, as was claimed.

“Give us one day for the defense; it is all we ask,” he said.

The Judge thought that was only fair, and the prisoner was taken back to jail, and Court adjourned.

As Flora, plunged in the deepest despair, was taken from the court-room by her mother and Aunt Rachel, she asked her cousin:

“Will you have any witnesses to-morrow?”

“Wait and we will see,” he answered.

At the appointed hour on the following morning the Court resumed its sessions. The attorneys for the State and defense were in their places and the prisoner brought in. It was remarked that he was paler than the day before, but calm, and evidently resigned to his fate. Flora, accompanied by her mother and Aunt Rachel, entered and took her accustomed place. The reporters, telegraphing the trial to the great dailies, stated that she was a trifle paler than the day before, and had the appearance of being less hopeful than at any time during the trial.

A rumor had gone forth that a roan horse with a black ear had something to do with the case, and the crowd, if possible, was more dense than the day before. Men were actually crowding and fighting to get into the court-room.

“Gentlemen for the defense, are you ready?” asked the Judge.

“We are, your Honor.”

“Have you any witnesses?”

“There is only one in court; the others will come as we need them. While I am examining this witness, a photographer with a powerful instrument for throwing colored views upon a smooth, white surface will be fitting up his instrument.”

Mr. Crompton rose, and with a sneer on his lips wanted to know if the Court was going to resolve itself into a magic-lantern show. Colonel Hale, equally as sarcastic, regretted that the gentleman's scientific education had been neglected, but stated that he wanted to introduce some evidence to the Court and jury which could not be done without the aid of a calcium-light instrument, which he had provided, in order to enlarge and make a perfect figure to be seen by all.

“Proceed, Mr. Hale,” said the Judge. “If there is anything inadmissible in the use of this instrument, Mr. Crompton,” the Judge added, “I think I will have sense enough to stop him in time. Call your first witness, Colonel Hale.”

“Mr. Hiram Bunce.”

Mr. Bunce came forward, was sworn, and took the stand. He was a farmer and lived a few miles from Wellsville. He was forty-six years of age, and knew defendant well. Three days before the robbery at Standish he had sold the defendant a horse. It was a light, sorrel horse, with a mane and tale almost white. After his arrest he had seen the same horse which defendant had sold to Mr. Lyons. It was the same horse the defendant rode at the time of his arrest. Witness had seen the horse in the possession of the sheriff from which it was said the bandit fell, and it was not like the one he sold defendant.

When Mr. Crompton was told to take the witness, he merely elevated his nose higher in the air and said he did not want him, implying very plainly by his words and manner that what he had stated had no bearing whatever on the case.

“Stand aside,” said the Judge. “Now, Colonel Hale, are you ready with your experiment?”

“Yes, let us have the magic-lantern show,” put in Crompton, rubbing his hands and sneering.

“Before the court-room is darkened and the instrument put in operation,” said the Colonel, “I want to recall Mr. Enoch Ralls.”

“If you recall him, he is your witness,” put in Crompton quickly, “and you lose all right of cross-examination.”

“I waive all such rights.”

A platform was ranged on one side of the court-room. Fortunately the opposite wall was smooth, white and unbroken by windows. By this time Enoch Ralls with a look of wonder on his face, his hat in hand, came into the court-room, and was asked to take the witness stand.

As the shutters were closed, the room became gradually dark, and the faces of Judge, jury and amazed spectators grew weird and wan among the shadows. Enoch shivered from head to foot, and wanted to know if they were “goin' t' hev a seance?”

“Silence!” cried the Judge, and his voice sounded strange and sepulchral.

A solemn silence and awe fell upon the crowd. Every one expected some awful voice to speak, proclaiming the doom or innocence of the prisoner. All felt as a man might, if conscious of the darkness of the tomb, when waiting for the trump of resurrection and the breaking of everlasting day. Men and women heard their own hearts beat, like the tread of marshalling hosts. Flora clung to her lover and whispered:

“What does it mean?”

The voice of Colonel Hale came out from the darkness, saying:

“I want this witness, and the jury, to fix their eyes upon the wall on the east side of the court-room. All ready, Mr. Tull, turn on your light and arrange the focus.” There was a clicking sound at the instrument, and a great calcium light appeared on the wall, which, as the instrument became properly adjusted, grew more perfect. The lawyer whispered something to Mr. Tull, there was a click, a sliding sound at the instrument, and next moment the life-size face and form of the defendant appeared on the wall. He was reclining on the pavement, his head resting against a lamp-post, a pair of false whiskers, wig and revolver lying on the ground at his side, his eyes were closed in death, and the blood streaming from a mortal wound in his breast. So ghastly, terrible, yet so real was the scene, that women shrieked, men shuddered, and Flora, clinging to her lover, whispered:

“Horace, Horace, it is not you! It is not you!”

“Mr. Ralls!” said the Colonel, “tell me whose image you see on the wall.”

After shivering a moment, the witness answered:

“Wall, et looks mighty like Horace.”

“Does it not look like the man who fell on your back during the bank robbery?”

“Yes, it does.”

“How much like him?”

“Exactly like him.”

He was told to stand aside, and Jack Auglin called for.

“May it please the Court,” said Colonel Hale, “there are two persons whom I wish to see this reflection on the wall, if the Court will permit them to come and look at it. I do not care to ask them any questions just now, but perhaps after a while I shall. I want them to see it, however.”

The Court granted his request, and General Hawley and Arthur Westfall, of Starkeville, were sent for. Of course, the attempt at robbing the Hawley bank was fresh on the mind of everybody in the court-room. Arthur's connection with the affair had been so generously misrepresented as to make him a heroic detective, who had joined the banditti for the purpose of entrapping them. Though it was dark when they entered the

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room, as soon as it became known that Arthur Westfall was present, three rousing cheers were given for the hero of Starkeville.

"Silence! Silence!" shouted the court bailiff, and when order was restored, Colonel Hale's voice was heard saying:

"I hope that all are gazing on the figure on the wall. Do you see it, Jack Auglin?"

"Yes, sir," answered Jack with a shudder.

"Whom does it look like?"

"Why, I believe it looks like Horace, only I don't believe he is shot and dead—is he?"

"Do you think it possible that the man whose image you see on the wall was the same who fell from his horse on the day of the robbery?"

"Wall, he looks like him, 'bout same size, clothes and everything."

"Do you say it is the same?"

"Yes."

"That will do."

The light was turned off, the window shutters open, and the glorious light of the sun once more filled the whole room, driving the ghastly figure from the wall, and revealing the serious and frightened faces of the jury and spectators.

"Now, may it please the Court," said Colonel Hale, "I want Mr. Tull, the photographer, sworn."

He was sworn and took the witness stand.

"Tell the jury, Mr. Tull, whose likeness that was reflected on the wall?"

"It was the likeness of one of the three robbers killed two weeks ago while trying to rob the Hawley bank in Starkeville."

"Who made the negative of the dead robber?"

"I did."

"Do you consider the likeness a good one?"

"It is as perfect a likeness as I ever saw," he answered.

"Take the witness, Mr. Crompton."

Mr. Crompton, who saw that his cause was really in danger, was roused like a war-horse and came to the charge. But he found the photographer a barrier not to be easily carried. His evidence was unshaken. General Hawley next took the stand, and testified to the same as Mr. Tull. Arthur was called, and stated that the reflection on the wall was an excellent life-size image of Joe Kerry, one of the Missouri bandits whom he had seen on several occasions, who was killed at Starkeville. A cross-examination brought out the fact that witness had been discharged from Mark Hunt's store on the charge of having stolen money from the till.

"He didn't do it!" cried a voice in the court-room, and Josiah Hunt elbowed his way through the crowd toward Court and jury. "No, Judge and gentlemen of the jury, Arthur is innocent of that charge. Ab Nichols is the real thief. He was caught last week stealing, and confessed to taking the money of which Arthur was accused. The Judge remembers that he held a special term and sent him up for five years."

All the while, Mr. Crompton, who had leaped to his feet, was making furious efforts to stop him, and objecting to either outside speeches or unsworn testimony.

"Very well," put in Colonel Hale, when the prosecuting attorney had somewhat subsided, "we will have Mr. Hunt sworn, and he can tell his story over."

"It makes no difference," roared Crompton. "That has no bearing on the case. We are not trying Arthur Westfall, but Horace Rathburne. A dozen witnesses have sworn he was guilty, and all this magic-lantern business is irrelevant, and I object to it."

"Your objection is overruled, Mr. Crompton," said the Judge.

"Then I will save my exceptions. I will see if the Supreme Court will allow magic-lantern testimony."

"Proceed, Colonel Hale," said the Judge, after Mr. Crompton had subsided.

"Call Reverend John Grogan," said Colonel Hale, in a cool, unmoved manner, which went to prove that he was master of the situation. At the name Flora started, clutched her lover's arm and whispered;

"Is it he?"

Horace gazed back along the aisle and saw a pleasant-faced man, with blue eyes and dark-brown, well-trimmed beard, coming toward the witness-stand.

"It is he," he answered.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 3.]

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RAPID TRANSIT.

The future of rapid transit is brilliant indeed. A new idea, and a sensible one, is an overhead trolley for passengers and freight. Small cars are suspended by bars of steel running through an overhead slot similar to that seen in cable tracks. These bars are attached to wheels, with ball-bearings. These wheels run over smooth rails, and so accurate is the adjustment that an empty car may be started by the touch of the finger.

A series of posts, not unlike those of the elevated roads, are to be used as supports. The cars are very light, in fact mere shells, but, of course, strongly built.

Stations will be frequent, and cars can run very close together, being so arranged that collisions are impossible.

There is already on foot a project for a freight line across the country to be built after this model. According to some of the more advanced civil engineers, the beginning of the decadence of the heavy, expensive, cumbersome railway train of the present is already in the near future.

THE RUSSIAN PRINCESS.

CHRISTENING DAY FOR THE NEW HEIR TO THE THRONE.

BY SOPHIE FRIEDLAND.

This day, November 26, has been a day of threefold joy for our Czar; the birthday of his mother, the first anniversary of his wedding and the christening of his first-born child. From the early morning the inhabitants of our capital had left their houses and had come out to see the decorated streets. The Nevsky Prospect, of which nearly every edifice was dressed in purple and ermine, the balcony covered with rugs and garlands, was crowded. The windows of our great stores were decorated with the busts and portraits of their Majesties, half hidden by myrtles and palm-trees.

In all the theatres a free performance was given in the afternoon and evening for the pupils of our schools and institutes. Between the acts tea and refreshments were served, and a box of candy, with the portraits of the Czar and Czarina, was offered as a souvenir to each!

There was a thanksgiving service in every church, and crowds of people could be seen kneeling on the steps of the St. Isaak Cathedral, offering heartfelt prayers for the Imperial parents and their newly-christened child.

When night began to spread her dark wings over our loyal city, a flood of light illuminated the main streets, which were entirely covered with carriages and foot-passengers, and the flakes of snow that were beginning to fall looked liked diamonds on the dark furs of the promenaders, heightening the effect of the whole scene.

A few days before the papers had announced that the christening ceremony would be performed at the church of the Great Palace at Tarskoe Selo according to the ceremonial which followed.

Tarskoe Selo is a small city, situated forty minutes' distance from the capital, and as there was a train five times in the hour, the pretty, gayly decorated streets were covered with spectators who had come to see the procession.

At half-past ten the magnificent apartments of the Great Palace were already filled with a brilliant crowd, consisting of the members of the Imperial family.

In front of the Palace were stationed several regiments with their banners and music, and a double line of carriages extended to the end of the long avenue before the Great and the Alexander Palaces.

A few minutes after twelve, the Czar, leading his mother, the Empress, Maria Feodorovna, arrived, and soon after commenced the ceremonial procession.

The rays of a glorious autumn sun, so rare at this time of year, fell on a picture seen but rarely in a lifetime. The procession was opened by two Imperial trumpeters on horseback, in the uniform of the Circassians, with red and black plumes, and holding bright carbines in their hands. A battalion of Bodyguards, in red uniforms, followed, and preceded the three gilt carriages, which came next.

In the first, an open carriage, drawn by six black horses, sat the Court Marshal, Prince Trubetzkoy, holding a high golden staff in his hand. Next to him, in the low, gilt phaeton, were seated two Secretaries of State; and in the third closed carriage, with the baldachin of red velvet, fringed with gold lace and panes of looking-glass, sat the Great Mistress of Ceremonies, Princess Galitzin, holding the little Grand-Duchess in her arms.

This carriage, in which a year ago Princess Alix of Hesse was driven to the Winter Palace, which, an hour later, she left as the Russian Czarina, was drawn by six milk-white horses in gilt harness, and decorated with white plumes. The coachman and the courier, who, with their powdered wigs and three-cornered hats, reminded one of other centuries, sat on the box; and two grooms, in red, held the bridles of the horses.

On the right side of the carriage in which sat the Princess Galitzin with the little Grand-Duchess rode the Grand Master of the Stables; to the left the Commander of the Bodyguards. The red line of horse-guards, and another of grooms, closed the procession, which entered the central gate of the palace and stopped before the main entrance.

The little Grand-Duchess was taken from the carriage into the Silver Room, where she was met by the members of the Imperial family.

The main entrance leads to the beautiful hall, in rococo style—all white, decorated with Japanese plates and vases. In the center is the staircase, which is divided into two parts. On one of its landings stands a great marble statue, half hidden by tropical plants, and on the other a sentry.

The Silver Room is also decorated in rococo style, and is so called on account of the walls, which are covered with silver tapestry.

From this room the procession started for the church. First, it passed the apartments of Maria Feodorovna, the wife of Emperor Paul II. In the dining-room stood in a long line the invited ladies, in the national costume—white satin dresses, with trains of red velvet; on their heads the *kokoschnik* (head-dress), embroidered with precious stones. On the other side, forming a double line, stood the ladies-of-honor of the Czarina, in red velvet, with trains of *drap d'or*, and the ladies-of-honor of the Grand-Duchesses in colored dress and headgear. Opposite to this most picturesque scene extended two lines of brilliant courtiers, in gold-embroidered uniforms.

Through these two double lines, forming a barrier, the cortége passed into the so-called Yellow Room, which is decorated in agate and jasper. Here were stationed the Senators, in uniforms of gold and red; and the Green Room, which came next, was occupied by the Secretaries, dressed in black and gold.

The procession now passed through a long gallery decorated with busts and portraits of the Imperial family into the famous Amber Room, where it was met by the military representatives of the army and the Adjutants of the Czar and the Grand Dukes, who, in their brilliant gala uniforms and decorated breasts, presented a beautiful picture, for which the Amber Room seemed to be the fitting frame. The decorations and furniture of this wonderful room were given by Frederick William of Prussia to Peter the Great. In the center of this room stands a model of the monument of the Prussian King. The walls are laid out with amber and decorated with pictures in mosaic in precious stones in frames of carved amber. The large mirrors are framed in gold, and with the rays of the sun entering through the many windows, this room seems to be a mass of gold. From the Amber Room the cortége passed through three magnificent apartments, once inhabited by Alexander I., and from there to the part of the palace which had belonged to Empress Elizabeth of Russia, which was filled with the members of the Council of the Empire, the Ambassadors and diplomats, accompanied by their ladies.

Here the procession, preceded by the Grand Master of Ceremonies and twelve heralds, turned toward the staircase which leads to the church. On the landing stood a sentry of His Majesty's Bodyguards. The white-marble staircase was decorated with palm-trees and orchids, and offered a beautiful sight as the cortége descended. In the white, immense church hall it was met by representatives of the navy—Admirals and officers and two sentinels of Court Grenadiers. Here the ceremonial procession divided into two parts, and once more it proceeded in a slow march through a suite of magnificent apartments.

First came the Chamberlains, in their red dress uniforms, followed by a long line of courtiers in black and gold; then His Majesty Czar Nicholas, leading his mother. The Czar wore the uniform of the Imperial Archers, the Empress-mother a white silver-brocaded national dress. They were followed by the Minister of the Imperial Court and the generals and adjutants on duty. Close to these, in couples, advanced the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses, the latter in magnificent national costumes and diadems covered with precious stones. The veils which held the train were carried by Imperial pages.

The little Grand Duchess, who came next, was carried by the Princess Galitzin on a pillow covered with gold cloth, which was supported by two Cavaliers of the Order of St. Andrew. Now followed another line of courtiers in brilliant uniforms covered with decorations of all kinds, which closed the procession.

The great portal of the church was thrown open, and from the altar, to meet their Majesties, stepped the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, accompanied by the members of the Synod. The Imperial family, beginning with the Czar, kissed the crucifix presented to them by the Metropolitan, and then took their seats.

Although the church, also in rococo, all in blue, with pillars of lapis lazuli and carved designs in gold, is exceptionally large, it hardly held the brilliant crowd that was entering.

The Greek Church does not permit parents to assist at the baptism of their children, so the Czar, once more touching the crucifix, stepped into the adjoining room.

The father-confessor of the Imperial family, Ianicheff, performed the holy ceremony. The sponsors were Queen Victoria of England, Empress Friedrich, of Germany, Queen Olga, of Greece, the King of Denmark, and the Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, by proxy, the Dowager-Empress of Russia, and Grand-Duke Vladimir, who stood at the font.

After the ceremony the Czar re-entered the church, and the first salute was given. The entire clergy then advanced into the center, while the choir sang "O Lord, We Praise Thee." During the mass which followed, at which the Metropolitan officiated, the holy communion was given to the newly-christened Grand-Duchess. Then the sign of the order of St. Katharine was passed on a gold dish to the Empress, who put it on her little grandchild.

When mass was over, the clergy congratulated their Majesties, who, followed by their Imperial relatives, once more passed into the silver room.

The representatives of foreign countries remained in the Great Palace, where they took dinner in the apartments of Empress Elizabeth. The rest, accompanied by the salutes from the cannon and the same glorious sun, returned to the Alexander palace, from where the young Imperial mother's blessing had followed her child on the first important step of her life.

SUFFICIENT.

We, who have cheated old Time at last
  And snatched from his hands a grudging dole,
We will part bravely now that it 's past
  And soul unfetters itself from soul.

Nay, love, sorrow not; rather praise
  The givers of good for this slight boon:
A garnered handful of happy days!
  The full content of a perfect noon!

Little had we to hope, and yet
  There came the joy that we thought denied.
Enough that again in life we met,
  Enough that again our ways divide.

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GOOD ROADS COMING.

In spite of the fact that in some States laws have been passed against the use of narrow tires, it is quite a novelty to see a wide-tired wagon used for any purpose.

Good-roads enthusiasts are beginning to wonder if the law is to become a dead letter; or are we only going very slowly in this reform? Wheelmen find riding on country roads extremely uncomfortable, if not impossible, on account of the cuts and roughness caused by the grinding of narrow tires into roads softened by rains. Wide tires would, on the contrary, improve the roads. Experts are giving their attention to bicycles suitable for winter use. A new tire, or rather, a new rim and tire, is under consideration. The tire is practical, non-puncturable, being made of a material not unlike tennis soling sustained by an elastic filling. The rim is a skeleton, and the width of the wheel at its outer circumference is not far from four inches. With this wheel an experienced rider can go safely over any ordinary winter road. It is possible to make quite rapid progress except in very dry, light snow. Ordinary damp snow makes a fine roadbed, as the wheel sinks in but a very little way, and one may ride across fields or anywhere that fancy leads, provided there is no stopping or starting on the programme. Once the rider drops off into the snow, getting under way again is quite an undertaking.

But the wheel is made for road riding, and as such will be a great success, if the highways are in decently good condition. It is rather difficult to get the public interest excited on any subject that pertains to improvements, but the winter is a favorable time to discuss such things and make ready for the good work which should, in all parts of the country, be pushed with energy as soon as spring opens. A great deal may be done in winter, but such work is little more than temporary. The idea of constructing main thoroughfares of concrete was advanced in the *Ledger* some time ago, and is now receiving the attention of the best thinkers on this subject. Of course, such roads are enormously expensive, but when built they are built for a quarter of a century. A well-laid concrete or asphalt pavement would, with the use ordinarily given to country roads, last a lifetime. This being the case, it certainly is cheaper; in the long run, to do it well than to be continually patching, remodeling, making over and reconstructing. Every county should raise money for improving its main highways. Interest-bearing bonds could be arranged to run for a term of years, and in this way the discomfort and annoyance of almost impassable roads would be done away with. There are few things that are more important to the material prosperity of any locality than its roads. Good roads mean easy marketing of all the products, less wear and tear of vehicles and a wonderful saving in the strength and endurance of draught animals. Let the good work go on, and when warm weather comes again let there be no delay or hesitation in attacking this most necessary undertaking.

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A NEW USE FOR A CHURCH.

News comes to us that a village in the vicinity of Cincinnati has up to a very recent date been so extremely good that it had no town hall or jail, neither any use for them, but all at once somebody has been very bad, and "durance vile" was a necessity.

There is in this locality an old building called the Free Church, so named because for many years it had been occupied by all denominations. It had, however, been tenantless for some time, and possibly in the hope that good influences might descend upon the culprit, a cell was partitioned off in one corner of the building, and the man was confined therein. Following his example, other men committed crimes, and additional cells were prepared, until now the entire building has been converted into a jail.

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LEAD POISONING.

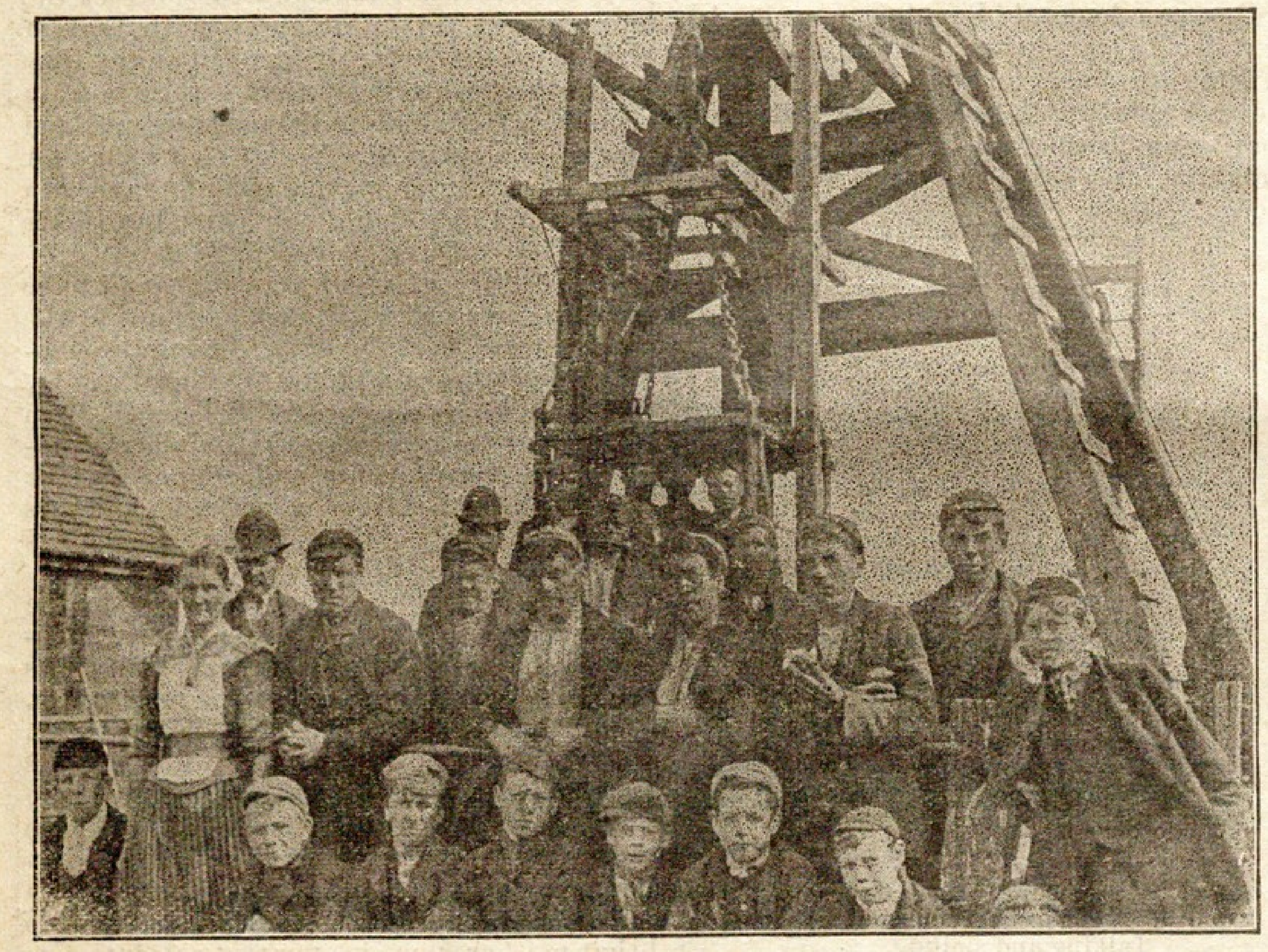
A Leadville (Colo.) man has called attention to a paragraph that has been going the rounds of the papers about the difficulty of keeping small animals in that part of the country. The item states that the rarefied air of the locality is the occasion of the trouble, but this is not the real cause of it. The streams all through that region are little more or less than a saturated solution of lead, and the water is fatal to everything that drinks it. Cats, dogs and other animals that cannot be kept from it die in a short time. Horses and cattle are watered from other sources. Strangers are almost always warned upon their arrival to avoid drinking from springs or running streams.

My Adventures in a Coal Mine.

BY REV. S. P. CADMAN.

"To-morrow is your first day at the pit, so off to bed, my lad, for bright and early will your rising be at four in the morning."

What cared I for aught save that by to-morrow eve I would be a proud collier laddie, only twelve years old, and yet having earned my first shilling. At my mother's bidding I climbed the old-fashioned oaken stairway, and the first sleep brought dreams of every legend, myth and mystery with which Dick Cartwright and Henry Tudor had so often regaled my listening ears. I had heard them tell of "Hairy Richard," the conjurer, and Sallie Partridge, who foretold deaths, and the white dog which ran before Stephen Rhodes the day he was killed, or, worst of all, of the "Seven Whistlers," birds of ill omen, whose ghoulish carolling was warbled in the witching midnight hour just before the terrific explosion at the Sandwell Park pits.



A GROUP OF MINERS.

All these superstitions rushed past me in my slumbers with panoramic swiftness. I saw, to my childish horror, the dreaded white dog. I tried not to follow, but something compelled me against my utmost will. And as I ran he turned and assumed another form, and reared before me like a Polar bear. I screamed, terror-stricken, and awoke.

"Come, sonnie," said the quiet, soothing voice of my mother, "you have done nothing but dream and cry to-night. Now you must get up and follow your father."

With a suspicious choking, she passed from the chamber.

I arose, dressed, and an hour later stood at the mouth of the Little Hayes shaft, seven hundred and fifty feet deep.

Over my head in the void of darkness the pulleys and chains groaned and rattled. The hoarse cry of the man in charge, the weird shadows of the tackle cast by the watch-fires, the grim, silent groups of hardy miners, made a picture which forever impressed itself upon my youthful memory. I see it again as I write.

"Get in here, quick!" commanded a voice.

And in I got: eight chains passed under me and seven others. So that we swung out over the yawning mouth with its long, long throat beneath us, just as you would truss and hang birds before a fire to cook them.

"Lower out!" and while the echo came back "—er out," the fresh, keen air of the December month gave way to a hot, musty smell—the smell of the pit which every miner recognizes as readily as a weasel scents a rabbit.

The living burden whirled round and round as the heavy three-linked chain rolled off the drum, and the men guided themselves with outstretched hands from rubbing the slimy walls of the shaft.

The sullen drip, drip, drip of water falling through immense distances was the only sound to break the oppressive silence. Miners seldom speak in descending; they chatter fast enough when they are coming upward, for then another day's chances have been safely taken.

Down, and down, and down, until my heart seemed weighted with the pressure of the millions of tons of earth above me. Should we never stop? The perspiration broke out at every pore. I gasped and sobbed and felt that choke I surely must, when my feet touched the solid ground once more. And I staggered from the shaft bottom inward toward the workings.

"Sit here and take time to get your second wind," said a burly fellow. "You'll see them send a horse down presently."

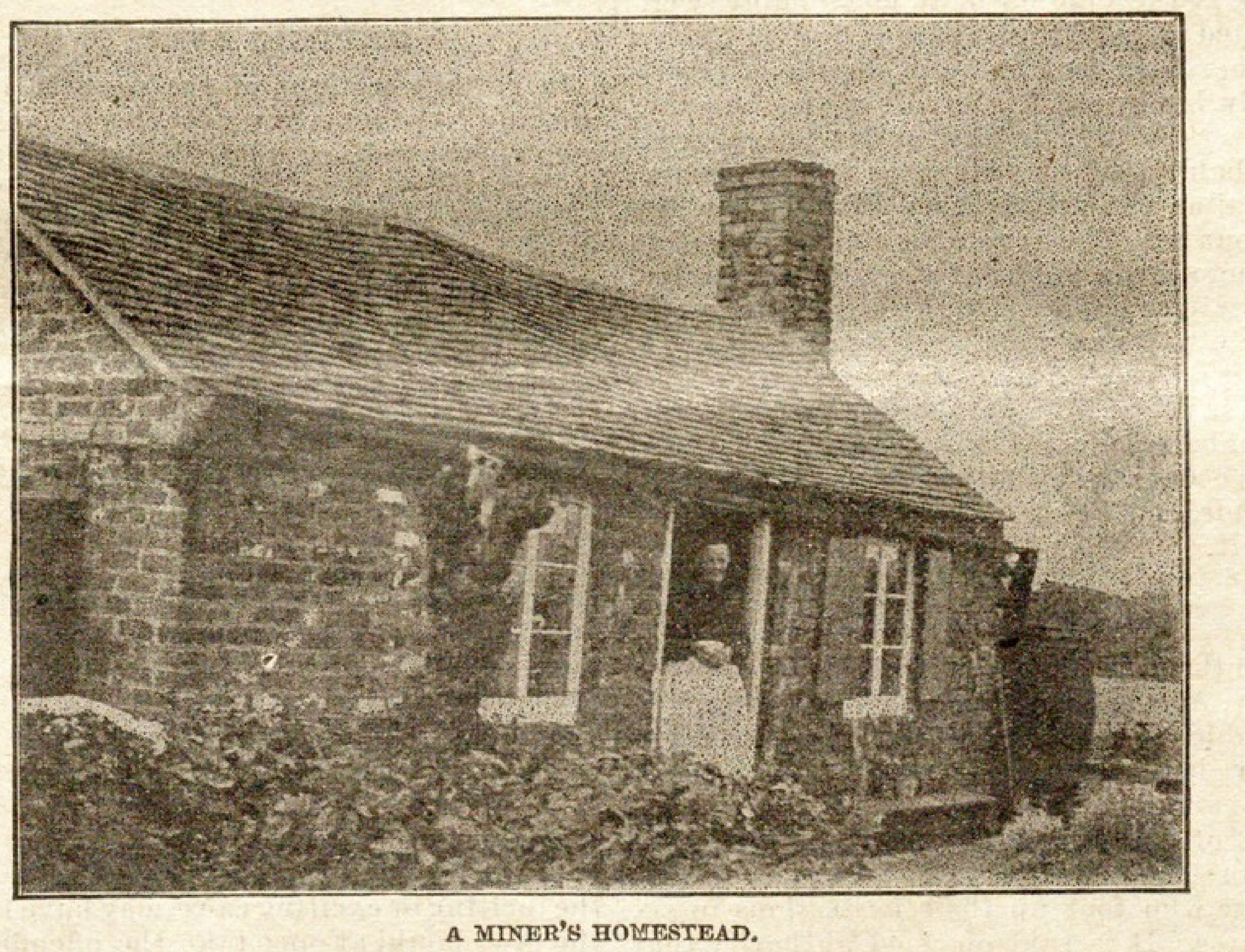
I began to get both breath and sight as the men came down in rapid succession.

Presently the roar of the receiving tackle grew louder than usual, and I heard the horse stamp upon the movable platform which covered the top of the shaft. Then it rolled back, and the horse was coming. When he hove in sight, he presented a most comical appearance. He sat in a huge rope cot, his hind-legs tied closely beneath his banks, his head and fore-legs pointing upward, and a canvas bag over his eyes.

Stir he could not until, in a jiffy, the men had faced him around, loosed his cords and unlaced the huge strands of the net. He stepped out and cast his beautiful eyes around in snorting surprise; for if you wish to know the real beauty of a horse's eye, you must see it as it shines like a blazing diamond in the semi-darkness of a coal-pit.

I at once volunteered to drive that horse, but I was told to wait for a space. They placed me in charge of an air-door—to open it for the teams, and see that it was strictly closed as soon as the teams had gone by.

So passed the first few weeks. Hard by my solitary station was an old and disused working. Boy-like, I filled its gloomy spaces with creatures of my lonesome imaginings, until one day I plucked up sufficient courage to explore the forsaken waste. I held in my hand a naked light, raised above my head.



A MINER'S HOMESTEAD.

I had proceeded some distance along the cavern, when a crackling sound caused me to start, and, to my surprise, I saw the roof was filled with blue flames, floating along with a wavy motion. I turned to fly back, but another sound came; a dull, hoarse roar, followed by a fierce blast of mingled flame and air, which threw me on the rocks with a thud and buried my bleeding form in dust and *debris*. My door was only a hundred feet away, and I had to get to its farther side if I wished to live.

For though the gas thus fired may race around the mine, it invariably returns to the very spot where it started, and more deadly than the inflammable gas was the choke-damp which always follows it to lull its victims into the iron sleep of death.

I arose and staggered forward, my bleeding, blistered hands feeling the way, for, of course, the candle had been blown from my grasp.

To my dismay, I saw the flame returning. Instinctively I threw myself down and buried my face in the dust. It raced over me like a lightning flash, its hot breath sizzling the timber and curling my flannel jersey into crispness.

I arose a second time and rushed forward into the darkness. I struck my head against a rock; the warm blood gushed out and trickled down my grimy face. I remembered no more. When I awoke I was in my own little bed at home, Doctor McKnight bending over me, and my hands and face swathed in white bandages.

The firemen, alarmed by the explosion, had rushed out, to find me within ten feet of my door, and, as they supposed, burned to death.

The origin of that explosion still remains a mystery. The overseer did not wish to know how it happened, for my naked light would have sent him to prison. So he glanced very curiously at me, and I returned his looks with interest.

After two weeks' vacation I came back to the mine, and found myself promoted to drive the identical horse which arrived in the mine when I did. The fact of our simultaneous coming seemed to me to link our destinies, and I was very glad to be rid of my frightful isolation as a trapper-boy (a door-opener).

Ah, that dear old horse! His name was "Jim," and no better, truer or more intelligent creature ever stretched leather. I protest that he was more of a companion to me for five years than many of my own kind. I spent more hours in his company than I did in that of any other living thing —eight hours a day for six days a week and for two hundred and sixty weeks.

He knew when three o'clock came as well as any man who carried a watch; twice he prevented me from accidentally killing him; once he saved my life by his almost reflective intelligence, and when at last he died, crushed by a whirring coal wagon, I felt that I had lost a friend.

After I had driven him for three years, we were placed on a route which had a very steep grade. An iron pillar, around which ran a large chain, hooked to the wagon, hindered the too rapid descent of the latter, heavily laden as it was with a couple of tons of coal. Jim always went before the wagon and stopped at the top of the grade.

One day the rails were wet and slippery, and the wagon would not stop. I snatched at the hook to slip it in the ring behind, but I missed it, the great mass slided out of my reach, and I expected to hear it roar down the hill like an express train, cutting the horse into fragments.

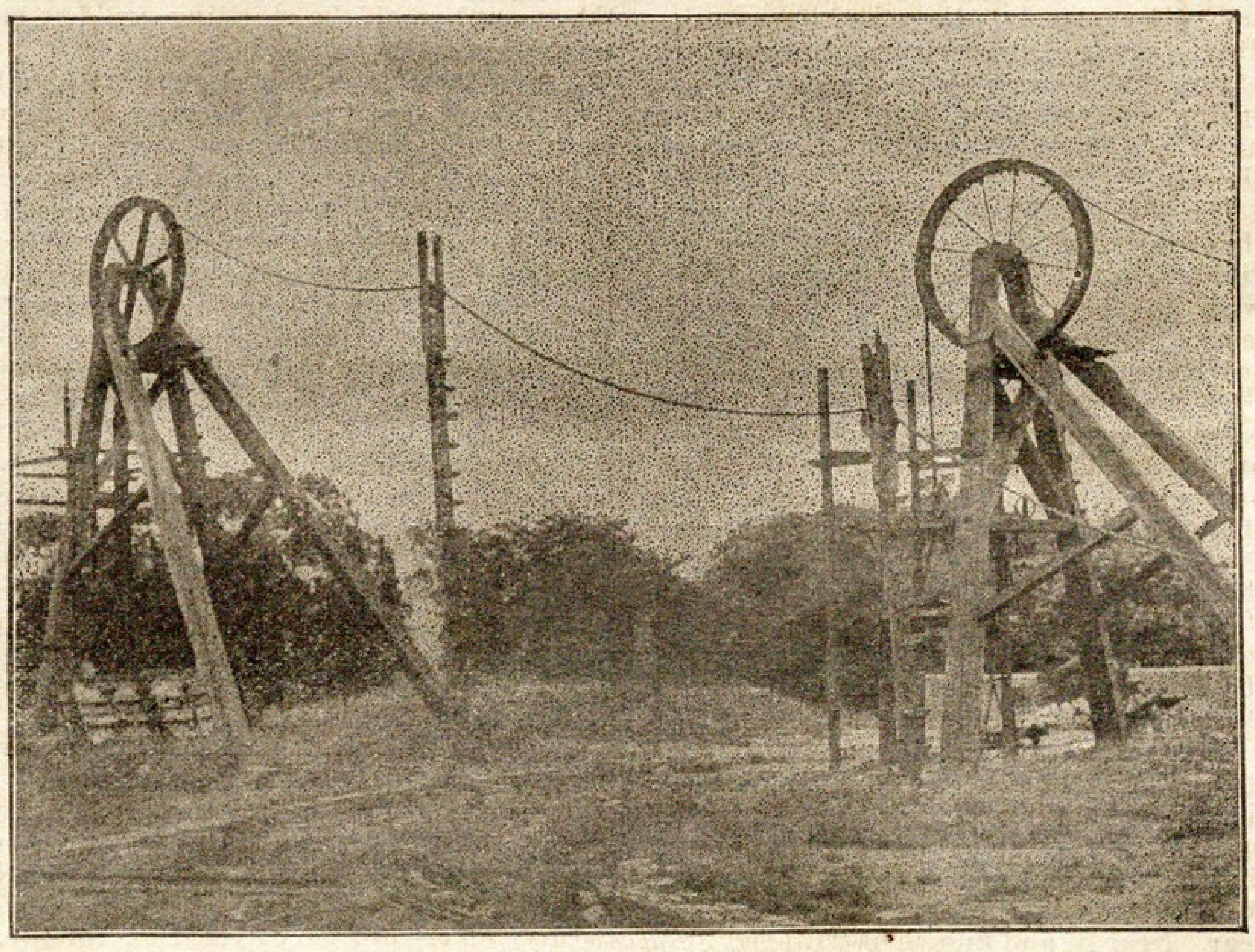
But, no! I had calculated without Jim. He knew that his life trembled in the balance, and while I could scarcely credit my senses, I saw him plant his strong forefeet firmly and place his hindquarters against that wagon, and to my joy *he held it*. To leap to the chain and, easing it, gain purchase and hook it, was the work of an instant.

The coupling made, I bade him move on, and the grand little animal allowed the load to lower on to its guardian balance.

One more story about Jim, and I must forego him here; but I shall never do so in my reminiscences.

He was a spirited, in fact a blooded horse, mouse-colored, and fiery to the last degree at the sight of a whip, not to mention the feeling of it. A harsh word would send the hot blood racing all over his distended veins.

At the close of the day, with only one more journey inward, he would not pass a certain spot. I was impatient, and called hastily to him. But he refused to budge. As he turned those lustrous eyes pleadingly around and snorted and pawed, I heard a crack. It was a jump for life. "Back! Back!" I cried; and the horse turned and leaped after me, while where I should have been had he not halted me, there rolled down enough of a heap to last a week for its removal. Somebody declared it came down right from the roots of the trees, but that, of course, was a hyperbolical expression.



THE OLD MINE WHERE I WORKED.

I was nearly eighteen years old before I saw a serious accident. Men had been killed, sometimes singly, sometimes in couples, but when the Shut-End Colliery was drowned with a flood which drained the surface ponds and brooks along the valley above the workings, strong men as well as weak and broken-hearted women felt that the great and terrible day had come, and that the hearts of all were tried almost beyond endurance.

"Somethin' 's a-goin' to 'appen," said old Silas Jones, who remembered the Grange Collierly explosion, which blew the gearing away from the pit mouth and sent a Vesuvian flame into the night sky full seventy feet high—a flame not less than three hundred yards long from where it started.

"No bodies foun'," said Silas, mumbling, as miners eighty years old will mumble, with dread and mystery—"No bodies foun'. Parson Wood 'e cum and read service o'er the pit, 'e did."

"What makes you say something will happen?" queried I.

But he would be troubled no more, and relapsed into the querulous silence of age. It is not for me to harrow the feelings of my readers with descriptions of the scenes which were daily witnessed. But one central impression I carried away from that most melancholy spot was this: That for courage, heroism, sympathy and sacrifice the rescuing bands of miners were the peers of anything I ever read in fancy's highest dreams of chivalry and war.

The story is well known, and authenticated, too, of the two miners who were excavating a shaft in Cornwall. They fired a blast before both could get away, and then, like the paladins they were, they quarreled who should stay and die. The unmarried one forced his companion to ascend for the sake of his loved ones, and gloriously the hero died. Such deeds need no impoverishing comment.

A further adventure nearly saved the reader the trouble of reading these I have already related, for had I not come through it in my lucky style, I should not have had the honor of writing to-night, in a comfortable New York City house, for my friend Mr. Bonner and his paper, the *Ledger*.

I had been left with two others until the last ascent, one day, and we three stood in our chains and waited. The strain came and picked us up. But my chain gradually slipped beyond my lower limbs, and while I ascended I felt myself lowering into the gulf beneath. Vainly I grasped at the wet, slippery links—grasped with a convulsive energy born of the love of life! My two companions clutched me by the shoulders, and cried aloud with frantic shouts, but the man at the surface had left his post, and I sped upward only, as it seemed, to return in death. Below me there was now two hundred feet of space; my body swung where my feet should have been; my hands rigidly wound around the chain where my body should have been. Strangely enough, I thought of the poor lad who so nearly fell at the natural bridge of Virginia, and I remember asking myself if he felt the terror which was then chilling my blood. One great wail of rage and despair at last echoed to the spot where the scoundrelly fellow was standing on the surface.

Alarmed, he ran to the pit mouth. I felt the motion cease, and then slowly, agonizingly slowly, we went back.

"Hold on! It's only a short distance now," whispered the gallant fellows who leaned half way out of their chains to keep their hold upon me. One last supreme effort kept me until within ten feet of the bottom. Then I fell like a log. Into that brief fleeting moment was compressed enough of suffering and suspense to last one's life-time.

My love of books had been to me a natural heritage. As I grew, it grew with me. I began to study Greek in the first mine in which I worked. I read Carlyle, Emerson, Tennyson and Descarte, with many other masters of prose and poetry before I was sixteen. Few days passed between the respective ages of fourteen and twenty-one when I did not spend from four to six hours per day in reading, writing, translating, and, must I confess it—orating too, and the latter very often to rocks and coal fathoms deep.

In the spring of 1886 I came to the conclusion that I would seek fresh fields and pastures new. I remarked to some of my father's workmen who stood around that the 20th day of May would be my last day in a coal mine. They laughed, but I meant it. And from that date to the present moment I have never descended a pit.

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Cor. William and Spruce Sts., New York City.

MARKING A REVOLUTIONARY SITE.

On the twenty-fifth day of December, one hundred and nineteen years ago, a battle was fought which practically secured to the victors, their children and their children's children the blessings of liberty. It was the battle of Trenton, and it was won by the most consummate strategy and a degree of skill that commanded the utmost respect from even his bitterest foes for the man who afterward became the Father of his Country. Up to this date there had been endless discouragements, weariness, suffering, privation and depression that was akin to despair; but the clear head and confident heart of General WASHINGTON at last won the day.

The 26th of December was given over to the wildest rejoicings. Men, women and children alike shouted, laughed and wept with an abandon of feeling that was in marked contrast to the sadness that preceded that eventful Christmas.

On the 26th of December, 1895, a band of patriotic women in Englewood, New Jersey, unfurled a flag in honor of the victory of nearly a century and a quarter ago. They chose the day after battle partly because Christmas Day was given over to other things, and partly because, as the State Regent said: "It was much better to do the rejoicing after the victory was assured;" therefore the choice of the day following the battle.

A spot on a little point of land where several streets intersect has long been spoken of as the site of the Liberty Pole that was raised by the Colonists to express their delight at the repealing of the Stamp Act. This pole stood and floated its flag for many a long year. Near it, and known as "Liberty Pole Hotel," was a tavern where General WASHINGTON frequently halted on his journeyings between Fort Lee and his headquarters near Hackensack.

Hotel and pole have long since crumbled into dust, but the stone foundations that supported the original pole were easily found, and on this point a Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution have just raised a Liberty Pole and unfurled a flag that is a credit to their endeavors and the community over which it floats.

The exercises of the day were interesting in the extreme, consisting of addresses, papers and patriotic music. The preliminary meeting was held in Dwight Chapel, and among the other good things of the occasion was an address by the State Regent of the Daughters of the Revolution. She said:

"I am glad to tell you that, within the last year, by law, our flag must fly from every school in New Jersey on every school day in the year. By law, every teacher must read the Declaration of Independence four times within the year. They must also teach the patriotic songs. Teachers who fail to do this are in danger of suspension or entire loss of their positions. I would have every Daughter of the Revolution know all about the flag. We should all know what the evolution of the flag was, how the various changes in it have come about, until we have the one of to-day; when it was first carried, who made the first one, why it was adopted, what was used before its adoption, what the colors mean and what the stars and bars represent, and from where came the first suggestion of its being. Also what is the idea of a flag, that it is the embodiment of all of the holy impulses which go to make up loyalty and patriotism, a kind of incarnation, a tangible something to worship, and that our flag is the most illustrious offspring of the Goddess of Liberty."

These sentiments were received with the greatest applause by the assembly and unanimously agreed to.

The Chapter that undertook this work of pole-raising at this historic point is known as "Liberty Pole Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution," and although it is little more than a year since its organization, it numbers nineteen members.

◆

THE SITUATION IN CUBA.

It is the opinion of a good many well posted persons that Spain is finding Cuba a rather hard spot to hold. Spain is practically bankrupt, her credit with the other Powers is little indeed, and it is not at all probable that she can bear for any length of time the tremendous draught on her resources. The revolutionists have but to inaugurate a policy of masterly inactivity, to wait, to hold out, to skirmish a little, and Spain will weary of the struggle and give it up as a bad job.

It is not at all improbable that Cuba will soon be recognized as a belligerent. When this occurs the situation becomes extremely simple, and the vexed problem almost solves itself.

◆

NO CAUSE FOR ALARM.

In the markets of the Old World and the New, American stocks have taken a serious tumble on account of the war scare, yet there is probably no country on the face of the earth whose credit is as good to-day as that of the United States. Uncle Sam's domains are peopled with millionaires and those who foot up their possessions in six figures. It is said on good authority that there are over seven hundred millions of gold alone in American banks and American coffers. How much there may be in silver and paper no one has as yet estimated, but the amount would be startling could it be accurately computed.

The rank and file of Americans have found it not at all worth while to boast of their financial standing. They get along a great deal better, and are less troubled by beggars and pleaders when they are not supposed to be extravagantly wealthy. Besides, there is a very large constituency in this country that does not care to make a "splurge." They go about their business, and accumulate their wealth, add to their possessions and solidify their financial status, unheralded of men. These people have, all told, an enormous reserve of means. They know how to take care of it. But if the necessity arises, and it becomes necessary for them to defend their homes and firesides, they are willing to part with a good portion of the wherewithal, and do so with satisfaction and enthusiasm, when in the doing they are helping to perpetuate the institutions they hold most dear.

The United States is not a good country to go to war with. There is too much of it, and it has too much to fall back on. Were one-quarter of the male adult population taken out of the haunts of business and from the fields, there would still be enough to carry on the ordinary avocations of life. America is full of women and children who know how to attend to business.

A man who has studied the American people thoroughly declares that if every able-bodied man in this broad land had to go to war, there would be brains and brawn enough left so that the wheels of trade and commerce, as well as the plows, reapers and thrashers, need never stop, nor need a spindle or blast-furnace remain idle. High-class machinery has made weak hands available, and even though the muscles are not tense or the frames stalwart, the ingenuity, shrewdness and versatility of our people are sufficient to meet any emergencies that can possibly arise outside of a general convulsion of nature.

Long live Uncle Sam and his numerous brood of clear-headed, brave-hearted, deft-handed and far-seeing sons and daughters. Long live the United States, united in every sense of the word, and doubly so when a foreign foe threatens.

Our conglomerate Republic may be like certain ill-conditioned families, rather willing to fight among themselves, but never hesitating to turn in and make common cause against an outsider, even to the cracking of skulls and the wringing of necks.

◆

GOLD AND SILVER.

Life has two ages:
  The silver and golden;
A book with two pages:
  A new and an olden.

Now stands before me
  A little child, passing fair;
Laughing eyes, full of glee,
  Peach cheeks and golden hair.

She thinks life all it seems,
  And for months, days and hours
She grasps the sunbeams,
  And gathers Life's fairest flowers.

Near to that golden head
  Silver is shining,
With luster passing rare;
  Age is refining.

There they are, youth and age,
  Long hours beguiling
With stories and maxims sage,
  Talking and smiling.

My Life book's two pages:
  The new and the olden;
The beautiful ages:
  The silver and golden.

◆

GETTING EVEN.

In certain sections of the country there are, and have for many years been, families who appear to live for no other purpose than to "get even," as they express it, with neighbors with whom they have for generations been at war. Hereditary feuds are encouraged and coaxed; injuries are nursed and dwelt upon; and murders are avenged with all of the cold-blooded brutality that one may read of in the records of semi-barbarous ages and people. Indeed, the feud, the duel and the vendetta are relics of an exceedingly low grade of civilization. That they should be permitted in what are called Christian lands is only another proof of how governments go to extremes in minding their own business in some respects, while they indulge in the mort outrageous violations of private rights in others.

One of the latest developments in the feud line is the murder of a young fellow by a fourteen-year-old boy. It is claimed that the act was precipitated by something connected with a young girl. It matters not what the inciting or exciting cause may have been, the law should at once take the offender in hand. The family have notified the officials that no attempt must be made to arrest the boy. The proper course would be to take the entire family into custody, and keep them in restraint until such time as they are able to understand that the laws of the country must be regarded. Murder and violence are unpopular among Americans, and the sooner this sort of thing is put a stop to the better it will be for the rising generation.

◆

IMPROVING THE NAVAL ACADEMY.

During the present session of Congress most earnest efforts are to be made to improve the condition of affairs at the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

It is reported to the Secretary of the Navy that the buildings are unfit for occupation: many of them have been condemned as unsafe, others are unsanitary and nearly if not quite all are inconvenient, and not at all adapted to the purposes for which they are used.

It is requested that a certain sum be set aside for reconstructing and improving these buildings, only a small portion of which is to be used each year. The contemplated improvements will ultimately consume between five and six millions of dollars, but this it is proposed shall be expended in comparatively small sums.

If we are to have a Naval Academy at all, it ought to be conducted in a manner suited to the importance of the work, and as naval warfare is to be one of the great items in future offense and defense, it rests with the authorities to see that cadets are instructed in the most thorough, up-to-date fashion. The old motto, "Millions for defense and not one cent for tribute," fits the American people as well to-day as it did when first the immortal words fell upon Colonial ears.

FAST TIME ON RAILROADS.

An attempt to run the Empire State Express from New York City to Buffalo in eight hours and a quarter was frustrated by a trifling accident, which, however, caused only a little delay and no serious results. The train for several miles made a mile in fifty-two seconds; the speed for a portion of the distance was said to be the best record ever made by a railroad train. The train was made up of coaches and private cars, also a buffet car.

It is somewhat amusing to contrast the present-day travelling speed with that of half a century ago. If one had at any time in the 'fifties declared that a theatre-train could leave Buffalo in the morning and land its passengers in New York City in time for the theatre or opera, there would have been laughter and ridicule unlimited, but this is just what is being done at present.

The future of rapid transit is said to be opening in a fashion almost dazzling to the enthusiastic investigator. Among the coming improvements is the overhead trolley with light, strong cars suspended from wheels with ball-bearings, the wheels running on smooth rails and supporting the cars by means of thick, short axles and bars of steel that drop through slotted openings between the rails.

There is no such thing as computing the running time of such cars, properly managed. Through lines can be so arranged as to have nothing to interfere with them. There would be no crossings, no obstacles.

Overhead trolleys will be infinitely less expensive than ordinary railways. There will be no costly roadbeds to build and keep in order, no culverts, no bridges, no wash-outs, and no snowdrifts. The rails on which the wheels run can be securely covered, so that neither snow, ice nor wet can interfere with them.

Among the coming great achievements of this great and glorious country, the overhead trolley has possibilities that will eclipse every undertaking of the next quarter of a century.

◆

AMBIDEXTERITY.

A little discussion has been of late going on upon the subject of ambidexterity, and whether the ability to use both hands with equal facility indicates anything.

It has been argued whether or not ambidextrous people are more intelligent than others, or whether they are better balanced than their fellows. It would seem that the proper solution of this little problem might be that either accident or inclination had led these people to use the left hand equally with the right. Children are taught mainly to use the right hand, and are consequently very awkward with the left, indeed sometimes almost helpless, as far as any delicate operation is concerned. Practice, however, will make one almost equally handy with both hands.

A lady received a severe injury to her right hand, and found herself obliged to use the other. It took but a short time, when she set her mind to it, to acquire the ability to do many things very well indeed. She wrote a creditable hand, singularly enough, however, as unlike her usual chirography as one could imagine. Indeed, no one would ever have suspected that the two were the work of the same person, although both were distinct and readable. It is extremely convenient to be able to use the left hand, and every person ought be take a little pains to cultivate the habit of doing so. Aside from the fact of its convenience, no one can tell when some accident may make such dexterity of the greatest value. Children should be taught this, and never allowed to depend altogether on the right hand. Equal use of both sides of the body gives a more symmetrical development, and much more steadiness and confidence in action of all sorts. The fact that many articles in daily use are made exclusively for right-handed people no doubt has something to do with this habit; but all the same, inclination and early training have strengthened the tendency until we have become a race of right-handed people.

◆

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◆

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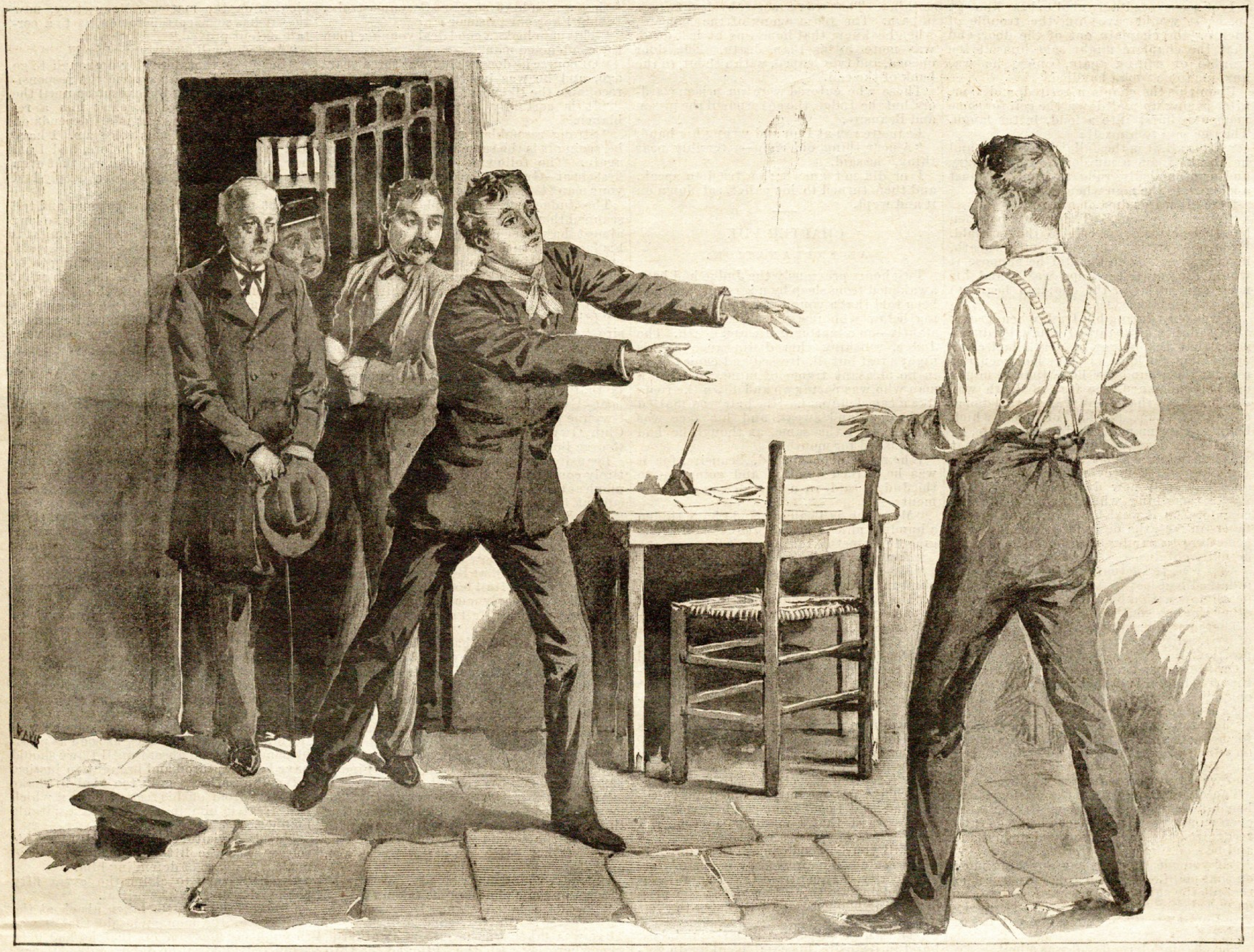

BEAUSIRE RAN AT IVOR AND WRUNG HIS HAND.

IN SEARCH OF GOLD.*

BY COLIN MIDDLETON,

Author of "The Fool of Destiny," "Innes of Blairavon," etc.

["IN SEARCH OF GOLD" was commenced in No. 52. Back numbers of the *Ledger*, containing the opening chapters of this story, can be obtained of all Newsdealers. *Even if the Newsdealer is out of back numbers, he will order them for you, if you request him to do so.*]

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALLMENTS.

[Ivor Gwynne and Gwendolen Llewellyn have grown up under the same roof, though they are not related. Left destitute at the age of six by the death of his father (his mother having died in giving him birth), Ivor had been taken to Mr. Llewellyn's home, called Glanwythian, near the river Usk, in England. Ivor's uncle, Richard Gwynne, had provided for his education, but now, having finished his last term at Cambridge, his uncle disowns him, on the pretext that he had not sufficiently improved his opportunities at the university, and places 250 pounds at his disposal. Ivor and Gwendolen are as yet not fully conscious of the fact that they have fallen in love with each other, and Ivor determines to seek his fortune in the diamond fields of South Africa, and starts for Kimberley. On the steamer he meets a college acquaintance named Beausire. There is a young Jew aboard who bears so close a resemblance to Ivor that but for the shifty and insincere expression of his eyes it would be impossible to distinguish the one from the other. He introduces himself to Ivor as Moses Löwe, diamond merchant, and volunteers information about the diamond fields, displaying an unusual familiarity with the gambling features of sharebroking. There are also two Jewish ladies, with whom Löwe seems very intimate. At Cape Town, Löwe and the ladies go direct to Kimberley, while Ivor and Beausire remain to see the town. Strolling down to the pier one day, Ivor is astonished to see the two ladies on the deck of a steamer just leaving for England, and when they see him they try to hide from him. On the following day Ivor starts for Kimberley, leaving Beausire behind. On the train he learns that detectives are looking for Löwe. When Ivor steps off the train he is mistaken for Löwe and arrested on the charge of murder.

It appears that Löwe had waylaid, shot and robbed an official of the Kimberley mines who was known to carry a large quantity of diamonds, and that before the only witness to the crime could come up he had mounted his victim's horse and escaped. With the help of the two ladies—his sisters—Löwe had so timed his movements with those of Ivor that the latter should be arrested as the criminal. The witness of the crime recognizes Ivor as the murderer and other witnesses identify him as Löwe. Unable to establish his identity, Ivor is convicted and sentenced to death.]

CHAPTER VII.

UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH.

FOR the first two days after Ivor had been condemned to death he sat in his cell, in a dull, hopeless state of apathy. He tried to think that perhaps, after all, he was in no uncommon position—a considerable percentage of innocent men must annually suffer under a code of laws which admits condemnation on circumstantial evidence alone; yet he had not even this consolation. He was condemned of murder on the testimony of an eye-witness whose position was immovable. This was, indeed, the irony of fate. An almost irresistible desire to laugh loud and wildly came over him at times when he realized the gross absurdity of his position.

As the days passed on and the hour of his execution drew nigh, he became fretful and angry that such injustice could be allowed to be perpetrated, with never a voice raised to say the contrary. Yet he must die. Of that there was no question. Even if Beausire did appear—which he now scarcely dared hope—it would be doubtful whether his evidence would bear against the intensely strong feeling against Ivor—in his character of Löwe.

The days wore on, and Ivor passed his time in writing to Gwen. Here was the true bitterness of death. That which there was always a possibility of his attaining, so long as he should be alive, presented itself to him, now that he was about to die, with an allurement which was almost maddening. He filled page on page of paper with the impassioned outpourings of a lover who knew that his advances would never be rejected, for he who had written them would be dead before they reached his mistress. He asked a hypothetical question which could never be answered in this world, yet one which would let Gwen know that his only thoughts had been of her. He debated long within himself as to whether he was justified in possibly awakening in her heart a love for a man who could never return it, and he came to the conclusion that it was perhaps only fair to her to let her know that her care for him had not met with indifference.

He wrote day after day, wondering all the time, in a vague way, how it was that he found it so easy to write unceasingly, when, as a rule, the regulation four sides of a sheet of note-paper presented a space which it was a difficult matter to fill.

Poor fellow! He even attempted poetry, and concocted some doggerel verses on his present position and of his possible position, whose sole merit was their sincerity. What a blind dolt he had been all those years during which he might have enjoyed the sweets of being in love! He had never asked himself if he was in love with Gwen. He was content to idle away the day with her, feeling dull in her absence and placidly happy in her presence. Never for one moment had his blood pulsed quicker at her approach.

He had never known a lover's rapture at the sight of his mistress, at the touch of her soft hand, at the pressure of her lips upon his own. He had merely felt a strange blank in his life for a day or two when he had left her for any length of time, which he had never taken the trouble to explain away. Now, in his despair, he cursed himself for the opportunities which he had allowed to pass unheeded—now, when he would count his life well lost if but for a moment he could hold his beloved in his arms.

The separation from her for an indefinite time had first awakened in him the knowledge that he loved her, and as hour by hour the distance between them grew greater, the stronger grew his love. His first act on landing was to write her a long letter, breathing in every line the love which he had dared not openly express, and now his last act on earth would be to tell her of his dead hope.

As always in life, that which he had wanted had not come at the right moment. Most men attain a definite object in life at some time or other, but almost never at the time they want it. Everything worth having seems to come at a time when the power of thoroughly enjoying it has passed, or when one is incapable of thoroughly appreciating one's good fortune.

Poor Ivor! He wrote to Gwen. That was all that was left for him to do. He had missed his opportunity when it lay ready to his hand, and now all that he could do was to say that he was unaware that the opportunity ever existed.

He thoroughly resented the visits of the prison chaplain. The prison chaplain came to him with the full conviction that he was a murderer, and that he ought to make his peace with God on earth before entering His presence. It was in vain that Ivor told him that he was laboring under a vast mistake; that he had no murder, nor, in fact, any particular sin of any magnitude for which to ask pardon. He objected to being prayed for as though he were one of the most abandoned of the human race. He said that it was derogatory to his self-respect, and would be obliged if the chaplain would confine his efforts to the judge and jury.

The chaplain was horrified at this frivolity and flippancy at such a crisis, and reminded Ivor over and over again of the solemnity of the occasion. Ivor said there was little necessity to remind him of the solemnity of the occasion, no one was more alive to the fact than he was; but that it did not add to his cheerfulness to be prayed for because of another man's iniquity.

The chaplain hoped that Ivor's heart would be softened.

Ivor didn't think it was necessary, as he was in a confoundedly soft state of mind at the moment.

The chaplain hoped that repentance would come, even on the scaffold.

Ivor had no notion of repenting a crime he had never committed.

The chaplain begged him to think of those who were near and dear to him.

Ivor had been thinking of nothing else for the last week, and would be glad if the chaplain would mind his own business; that he wanted no meddling parson coming to interrupt his thoughts when he had but a few days to live.

The chaplain thought that it would be as well to retire until the prisoner was in a more amenable frame of mind.

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Ivor was exceedingly glad to hear him say so, as it would save him the trouble of kicking the chaplain out of the door, and that the chaplain might save himself the trouble of calling again, unless he was anxious to be “man-handled.”

Upon this the chaplain retired, and Ivor, after pacing up and down the cell for some moments, burst into a loud, bitter laugh. Then he said to himself:

“After all, it is the fellow’s business, and he thinks I am a murderer. I was angry and confoundedly rude to him. I must apologize to the man when I get—”

Here his words died on his lips.

“When I get out.” That would be when he stepped from his cell to the scaffold. Even now, within three days of his death, hope was not dead, nor did he suppose it would die, until the rope was round his neck and he heard the chaplain begin to read the burial service.

It was only during his trial, when he saw all possibility of acquittal gradually disappear, that the horror of death had come upon him. So long as there had been any reasonable ground for hope that he might not be condemned, the fear of death was strong. Now that there was no real hope, only that vague shadow of hope which haunts every man every day of his life, he could face death calmly. The hope that was left to him was merely that indefinable yearning which is ever present to every one that each new day may bring that vague something which would make life complete, be it wealth or power, or love or fame—in fact, the desire of life as it ought, according to our light, to be, and not as it actually obtains.

As it was, the actual fate to which he was ordained had lost its terror. He could face death now with a bold countenance, as any other English gentleman could.

There merely rankled in his mind a feeling of irritability because of the injustice of his position.

On the afternoon of the day previous to that fixed for his execution he allowed the chaplain to visit him again.

As soon as he entered, Ivor began:

“I merely wished to apologize to you, sir, for being so rude to you on the last occasion on which you came. The fact of the matter was, I was rather upset at one or two things, and we were at cross-purposes.”

The chaplain accepted the apology, and began to say something about “repentance even on the very eve of death being as fully recognized as”—when Ivor held up his hand and begged him not to proceed.

“If you please, don’t say anything more on that point. I was in solemn earnest as regards the substance of what I said to you on your last visit. I merely wished to apologize to you for the manner in which it was said.”

The chaplain bowed and was silent.

“If, however,” continued Ivor, “you would consent to do me a favor, I should feel obliged to you.”

The chaplain would do it with pleasure.

“I have here two packets. One is a letter—rather bulky, as you see. The other is a note of my small belongings, and a few directions as to how I wish them disposed of. Would you be good enough to post the letter and open the other little document after the sentence has been carried out?”

“Certainly,” said the chaplain.

“After the sentence has been carried out; on no account before.”

The chaplain would give his word not to post the letter or open the document until after the sentence had been carried out.

“I am sure I am very much obliged to you,” said Ivor; “and now good-bye. I have to thank you for the trouble you have taken, and am sorry that our ideas do not coincide as they might.”

Ivor held out his hand, and the chaplain took it, and said:

“Is there absolutely nothing I can do for you? Perhaps the fact of your being a Jew—”

“I am a Christian, thank you, and there is absolutely nothing further you can do for me. Good-bye.”

The chaplain sighed, turned on his heel, and left the cell.

When he had gone, Ivor began to write again, and the chaplain would have a second packet to post to Gwen in the morning.

He threw himself onto his pallet early in the evening, little expecting to get any sleep, but he slept like a child until dawn.

He woke with a start, having dreamed in the second before consciousness actually returned that he was listening to the tolling of his own death-knell. He sat up on his pallet, and heard the tones of the prison bell at the gates jangling in the still air.

They had come for him—the gray dawn was peering in through his narrow window.

He stood up and passed his hand through his hair, and a slight shiver went over his frame. The morning air was chilly, he thought.

Soon he heard footsteps advancing along the passage; they were come to pinion him. He stood up in the middle of the cell and breathed a short prayer, and then waited. Surely they had come very early for him—he had understood that he was to be hanged at eight o’clock, and it could not be nearly so late as that. The footsteps stopped at the door of his cell.

He clenched his hands tight, and an expression of hard determination spread over his face. He could face death. These few moments were worse than death. The mere mechanical severance of body from soul was nothing. That was a mere physical twinge of pain. The tense agony of the moment, when he knew that hope was at last dead, was more bitter than death. The door opened, and Ivor leaped, with a shout, to the back of the cell.

Those who entered were no prison warders, but the Judge, the governor of the prison and Beausire.

Beausire ran at Ivor and wrung his hand.

“A near thing, old chap—a terribly near thing,” he said.

Ivor did not answer; he tried to speak, and then turned to his pallet, sat down on it and wept.

CHAPTER VIII.

AN EXPLANATION.

Two hours previously the Judge had been awakened from sleep by a servant, and had been told that a young gentleman was waiting below who insisted on seeing him instantly—on a matter of life and death. The Judge, relishing this disturbance of his night’s rest but ill, dressed and came down, in no pleasant frame of mind, to meet a man who was pacing up and down the room like a caged animal. His hair was matted with dust and sweat, and his face was grimed with the same, as though he had not washed for months.

When the door opened, Beausire, for it was he, turned quickly, and going up to the Judge, said, in a tone of eager excitement:

“My name is Beausire, and I have ridden a hundred miles on end to prevent this disgraceful injustice taking place.”

“You refer to—”

“My friend, Ivor Gwynne, of course,” burst in Beausire.

“He has been condemned to be hanged to-morrow morning, or, rather, this morning, and nothing short of a reprieve direct from the Governor can save him.”

“Don’t talk infernal nonsense to me, sir! By Heaven, if he is hanged, I’ll get my governor to have you and the whole court hanged, drawn and quartered into the bargain.”

The Judge went to the bell and put his hand on it.

“Don’t ring that bell,” said Beausire, in a changed tone of voice. “I am afraid I have forgotten myself, but this awful injustice has put me out, and my long ride—I found that I could not catch yesterday’s express, and that I might be in time if I rode.”

“Will you be good enough to sit down?” said the Judge, impressed by Beausire’s air of sincerity. “I am afraid that I am incapable of doing anything to prevent the prisoner being hanged, but I will listen to what you may have to say.”

“The whole thing is a ghastly mistake,” burst in Beausire, his excitement again getting the better of him. The Judge half rose from his chair, and Beausire, putting out his hand deprecatingly, went on: “This man, Ivor Gwynne, is an old friend of mine. We were at Cambridge together, and he was in my company continuously until the day he left Cape Town to come here, and the murder was committed before that time.”

“Yes, that is the defense that the prisoner set up and entirely failed to prove, his sole witness giving the most damaging evidence against him.”

“I know—I know. I read the report of the trial in an old paper at Prieska. The manager of the International Hotel made a very natural mistake. It is very hard to distinguish Gwynne and this fellow Löwe apart. Löwe came out on the ship by which we travelled, and probably matured his plans when on board.”

“The only thing which will help you in any way is to *prove* that the prisoner and Löwe are not the same man. I can’t be expected to move in any way in the matter on your mere statement. He has been convicted beyond the shadow of a doubt by a jury, and he must pay the penalty unless something directly subverting all the evidence can be shown.”

“I can’t get any corroborative evidence unless I can remember exactly where we were at the time of the murder, and then I am not sure whether we were in a hotel or not.”

The Judge shrugged his shoulders and said:

“This may be all very true, Mr. Beausire, but you must see yourself that it cannot help you in any way. It will be regarded as a mere cock-and-bull story, got up by an accomplice of Löwe’s to pervert justice. Can you produce no evidence which will go as proof?”

“It was only yesterday that his telegram was forwarded on to me. I hadn’t an address before. He wrote to me to say—”

“Yes, yes, I know. That all came out. It was regarded as a blind,” interposed the Judge.

“And he asked me to bring, if possible—to bring with me anything to establish his identity.”

“Well?”

“I happened to have with me some college groups taken during the last three years. A fellow somehow clings to those sort of things, and they are about the only absolutely *unnecessary* things I brought with me. Gwynne happens to be in nearly all of them.”

Beausire produced a roll of unmounted photographs from an inner pocket, and began to spread them out one by one on the table.

“Here you are. Trinity Hall second boat—that was in his first year—Gwynne stroke. Is that like your prisoner?”

“This man looks a good deal younger than the condemned man.”

“Of course he does. That was three years ago, and he was just nineteen. Do you recognize the likeness?”

“It is certainly a very strong resemblance.”

“Strong resemblance! It would need to be, seeing it is the same man. Here you are again. The following year, Trinity Hall first boat—Gwynne stroke. Is that like your man?”

The Judge took up the photographs and scanned them eagerly, a smile, which might almost have been called sad, dwelling on his face. He turned them over, and apparently forgetting Beausire’s presence, he sighed and said to himself:

“The Hall boat. It must be thirty years ago.”

“I think you are mistaken, sir,” said Beausire, “that is last year’s boat.”

The Judge started, and picked up another photograph.

“Last autumn’s Trial Eight—Gwynne six. Is that like your man? This year’s Hall boat—Gwynne stroke; the Hawks’ Club, Gwynne president—in the middle; the Pitt Club, Gwynne secretary—sitting next Lord George Boisragon. Is this like your man?”

Beausire, as though his argument were entirely conclusive, looked with an air of triumph at the Judge, who was gazing abstractedly at the photograph of the Trinity Hall “eight.”

“I see Hills and Saunders still take college photographs.”

“Why, do you know Cambridge at all?”

The Judge smiled at Beausire, and said:

“I stroked the Hall boat just thirty years ago. There *was* only one in those days.”

“Then we are all Hall men together,” said Beausire, delightedly. “Allow me to shake hands with you, sir. That settles the matter offhand. You would never dream of seeing a man of your own college strung up for somebody else’s offense?”

The Judge, almost convinced, though against the evidence of his own eyes and the overwhelming testimony of the witness to the crime, laughed, and said:

“I am afraid I can’t look at the matter in that light. You see, I am only a machine to pass sentence on the verdict of the jury.”

“But the thing is utterly monstrous!” almost shouted Beausire. “Can’t you see that this is the man? He was at Cambridge with me until the second week in June, and he came out here with me a few weeks ago, and—”

“Steady, young man; steady. When was the last of these photographs taken?”

“The date is on them. Here you are. This year’s Hall eight—summer term 18—. That was taken in the last week of term, somewhere between the 10th and the 15th of June.”

The Judge thought for a moment or two, and then said, more to himself than to Ivor:

“Yes, I remember Löwe was here in the first week of June, for I saw him myself.”

“There you are, then!” cried Beausire. “How could he be in Cambridge at the same time? I tell you again, that the likeness between the two men was a joke all over the ship!”

“But how am I to know that this is not all an arranged affair? I don’t know any of these other men, and it is very simple for a certain number of men to get photographs and call themselves the Trinity Hall eight, or the Hawks’ Club, or anything else they please, and have any date they please printed under it. Löwe is quite capable of evolving something much more clever than that. I have had considerable experience of him, and he is, without exception, the most cunning, plausible, slippery devil (excuse my language, sir), I have ever come across. I tell you candidly that, until you came here to-night, I was absolutely convinced that the man in prison was Löwe, and even now that conviction is by no means materially shaken.”

Beausire gave a groan of despair. He was at his wits’ end. He had absolutely no proof, save his bare word and the photographs—and they apparently availed nothing.

He sat in his chair, with his head between his hands, trying to produce some argument which might convince the Judge, when steps were audible advancing along the passage toward the room.

The servant, bidden, entered and said:

“A person to see you on urgent business, sir.”

“A person—what sort of a person?”

“Looks like a police-officer, sir.”

“A police-officer! Show him in. This grows interesting.”

The police-officer came in, saluted, and seeing Beausire—who had started up from his chair and was looking eagerly at the newcomer—hesitated.

“What is your message? Never mind this gentleman.”

“A telegram has just come in, sir, to say that Löwe has been seen or captured—I can’t rightly make out which from the cipher—at Klerksdorp, in the Transvaal.”

Beausire gave a loud shout of joy, and ran at the astonished officer and wrung his hand.

“Did the message say nothing further?” asked the Judge.

“Nothing but that.”

“Thank you.”

The police-officer saluted and retired, and the Judge, turning to Beausire, said:

“This puts an entirely different complexion on the matter. Your story, now that it has some corroboration, is to a certain extent proved.”

“And you will let Gwynne free?”

“I can’t do that, but I have enough to go upon to enable me to assume the responsibility of postponing the execution until the special order arrives granting him a reprieve and freedom, but it all depends on the authenticity of this telegram. I have had dealings with Löwe before, and I am not prepared to believe off-hand that even this telegram is not part of a deeply-laid plot on his part.”

“Let us go at once to Gwynne and tell him,” said Beausire. “It won’t take long to show that the fellow they have caught is Löwe.”

“Yes, I think that is the best thing to be done. I will go myself. The one thing that makes me inclined to think that there has been a mistake is that I feel certain that Löwe could never have had a gentleman for a friend, and you certainly seem to be very eager about the prisoner’s safety. Come, let us go together.”

* * * * * *

Ivor was released in two days, although Löwe had not been captured, after all. He had made good his escape, notwithstanding the odds had seemed against him.

However, certain proof was forthcoming that it *was* Löwe who had escaped capture in the Transvaal, and, moreover, he had escaped with the loss of the diamonds he had stolen. These being returned to Kimberley, afforded ample evidence that Ivor was not the culprit, more especially as the man who had just failed in Löwe’s capture was a Kimberley detective who knew Löwe well by sight.

The inhabitants of Kimberley were none too well pleased when they knew the turn affairs had taken. Here, at any rate, was a man under sentence of death for a crime, and he had been released on the very eve of the fulfillment of his sentence, and there was none to act as substitute. The public thirst for blood had been excited, and as yet remained unslaked.

From the Judge, Ivor received a note of warning that it would perhaps be as well for him to leave Kimberley as soon as possible, and to remain absent until Löwe should have been captured and brought to justice.

Ivor himself was only too glad to shake the dust from off his feet of a town which had treated him in such an inhospitable manner.

The first visitor he received after his release was the little Irishman who had made a pretense of defending him.

He had come to claim the extra fifty pounds due on Ivor’s acquittal.

Ivor was not a little taken aback at the audacity of the man, and said that it was through no efforts of his that he had been acquitted, and that he did not intend to pay.

A very pretty little quarrel ensued, which ended by the Irishman accepting five pounds, after the consumption of as much whisky as he could hold at one sitting. On the evening following that on which Ivor had been released, he and Beausire dined with the Judge, and it was then that the Judge advised him to leave Kimberley—at least for a time.

“You see, Gwynne, so long as Löwe is at large, you carry a hanging face about with you. At least half of the people believe now that you are the culprit, and will continue to believe it until that blackguard Löwe is caught.”

“I quite see that,” answered Ivor; “and, to tell the truth, I shall be only too glad to get away. I suppose we must try some other diamond district.”

“If I were you I would quit South Africa entirely—for a time, at any rate. If you don’t, you will suffer endless annoyance. You may be even arrested—in fact, you are sure to be, over and over again, until Löwe is caught. His description is out everywhere now, and he is a pretty well-known man by sight, and if you and he were put together now, and neither spoke, I couldn’t tell the difference between you at once.”

“It seems rather hard luck to be compelled to leave a country because one has been wrongly accused of a crime,” said Ivor, with a laugh.

“Nobody says you are compelled,” said the Judge. “I am merely giving you a piece of friendly advice for your own good.”

“Where else can we go?” asked Beausire.

“There is no necessity for you to go,” said Ivor.

“All right, old cock; I am coming along with you. You need some one to look after you, I think. You would have been in a nice mess if it hadn’t been for me here.”

Ivor stretched out his hand to Beausire and shook it, and, turning to the Judge, said:

“You see, we are both adventurers, and we came here with the hope—perhaps I ought to say the intention, for that was what it amounted to in my case, at any rate—of making our fortunes, and now you advise us to cut ourselves adrift again.”

“The days of fortunes are over here, unless you have a big capital to work on. It is only a question of time, of course, before golden opportunities will turn up again somewhere in this vast continent, which is literally full of wealth hidden away underground; but at present, at Kimberley and Johannesburg, fortunes are over, so far as the newcomer is concerned.”

“What do you suggest, then?” said Beausire.

“You are both adventurers, you say. Why not try Australia? There are plenty of opportunities there for men like you. Try the gold-fields. I should not go to Victoria or New South Wales. Try Western Australia. There have been rumors of gold there for long enough. You have twenty times the chance of a fortune there that you have here. The climate, too, is good all the year round. Compared to this place it is Heaven, I am told. Why not go there?"

Ivor and Beausire looked at each other for a few moments, during which they apparently settled the matter.

They rose simultaneously from the table, as though they would start at once, and the glow of expectancy shone in their eyes as they turned from the table.

"One moment, gentlemen—a toast: 'Cambridge and Trinity Hall,'" said the Judge. "It is not often that three men of the same college meet casually and go through the experience we have met with. 'Cambridge, and may I go there when I die!'"

"'To our next merry meeting,'" said Beausire.

The Judge shook his head doubtfully; and he was right. Ivor and Beausire never saw him again.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT—NO. 3.]

◆

GIRLHOOD.

BY FRANCIS THOMPSON.

Wild Dryad! all unconscious of thy tree,
With which indissolubly
The tyrannous time shall one day make thee whole,
Whose frank arms pass unfretted through its bole,
Who wear'st thy femineity
Light as entrailéd blossoms, that shall find
It ere long silver shackles unto thee.
Thou whose young sex is yet but in thy soul,
As hoarded in the vine
Hang the gold skins of undelirious wine,
As air sleeps, till it toss its limbs in breeze.

◆

THE TURKISH QUESTION.

It is a curious complication that there are humane and intelligent Turks in Constantinople who are eagerly desiring reformation in the Government, realizing its despotism, inefficiency, and the falseness of its pretenses. It has been for some time a puzzle to all on-lookers why these people could so enthusiastically join the atrocities that are practiced upon the defenseless Armenians. They claim to have favored and protected these people, to have made them their friends and given them counsel and opportunity for great wealth. They evidently believe this, and thus their bitterness and hostility are accounted for.

There is but one explanation of this, and that is that the rank and file of the Turkish people, even of the educated classes, are kept in ignorance of the real state of things. Foreign papers are positively forbidden in Turkey, and no home paper is allowed to print anything that the authorities do not desire the people to know.

It is said that the residents of Constantinople are in utter ignorance of the horrors that are being committed among the Armenians. The Government tells them that their friends and countrymen, the Turks, are being robbed, murdered and tortured by the Armenians, and that the Government is merely exercising a paternal privilege in restoring peace and maintaining order.

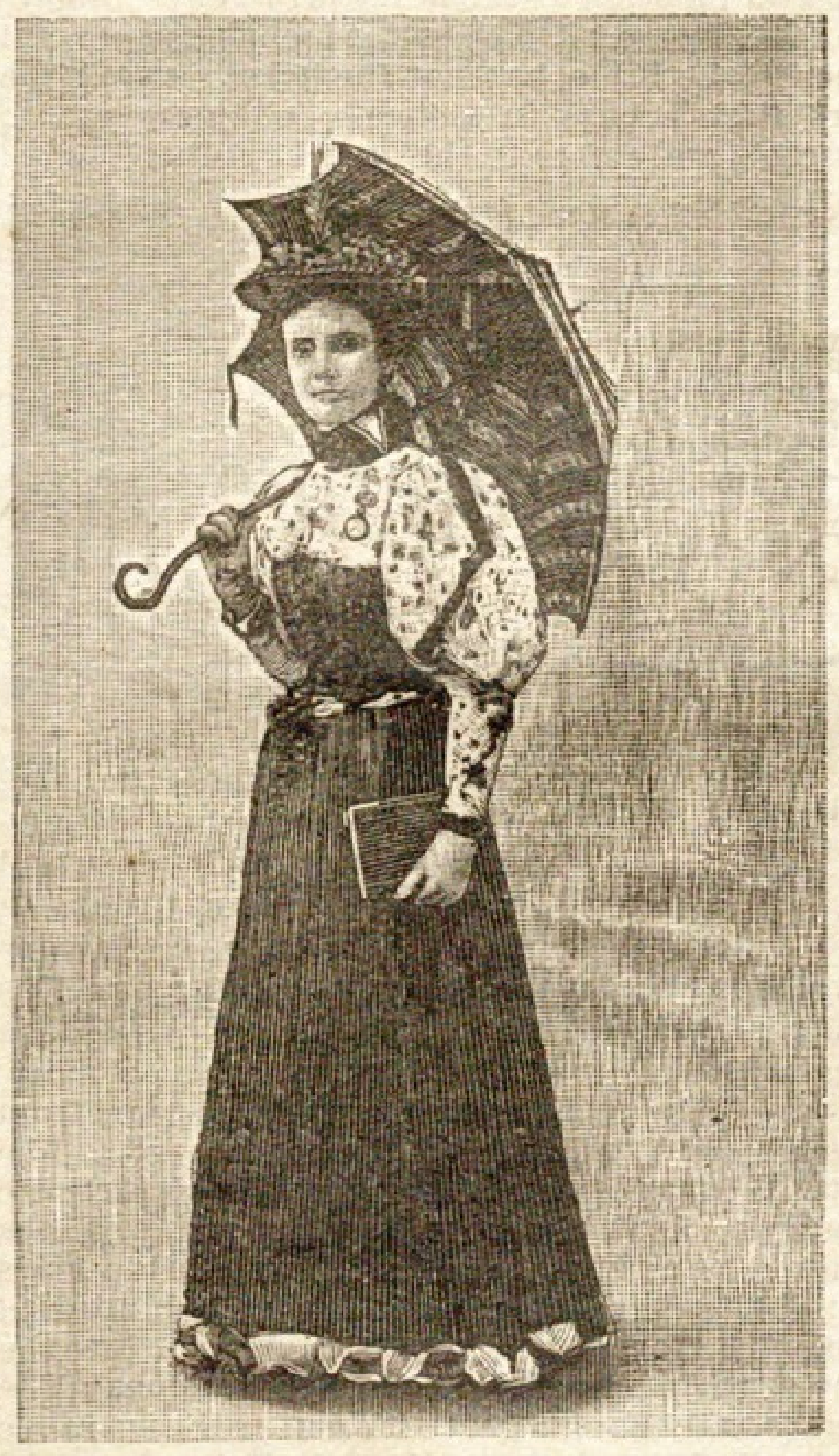
An authority on this subject says that years ago the Armenians were popular, well-to-do, well-cared-for and favored people in that country. They enjoyed more privileges than almost any other of the tribes under the Turkish rule. But there has been a revolution in this respect within the past few years. The following paragraph clearly explains the situation:

"Immediately after the disastrous war with Russia the whole attitude of the Turkish Government toward Armenia was altered. It seemed resolved to wreak upon those hapless provinces revenge for its losses in the Balkan States. One by one the rights and privileges granted to the Armenians by the Hatti-Humâyûn were abolished. The constitution of the Armenian Church was violated and ignored. The remonstrances of the Armenian Patriarch were unheeded. The Armenians were officially discriminated against and oppressed. And, finally, a systematic campaign of massacre was begun against them for the purpose of so decimating their numbers that they would be in every vilayet and sandjak in a hopeless minority. These facts are known to all the civilized world, excepting to the Turkish people. They are kept in profound ignorance of the truth, and thus are led to think their Government is altogether right, and the Armenians and the Powers of Europe are altogether wrong."

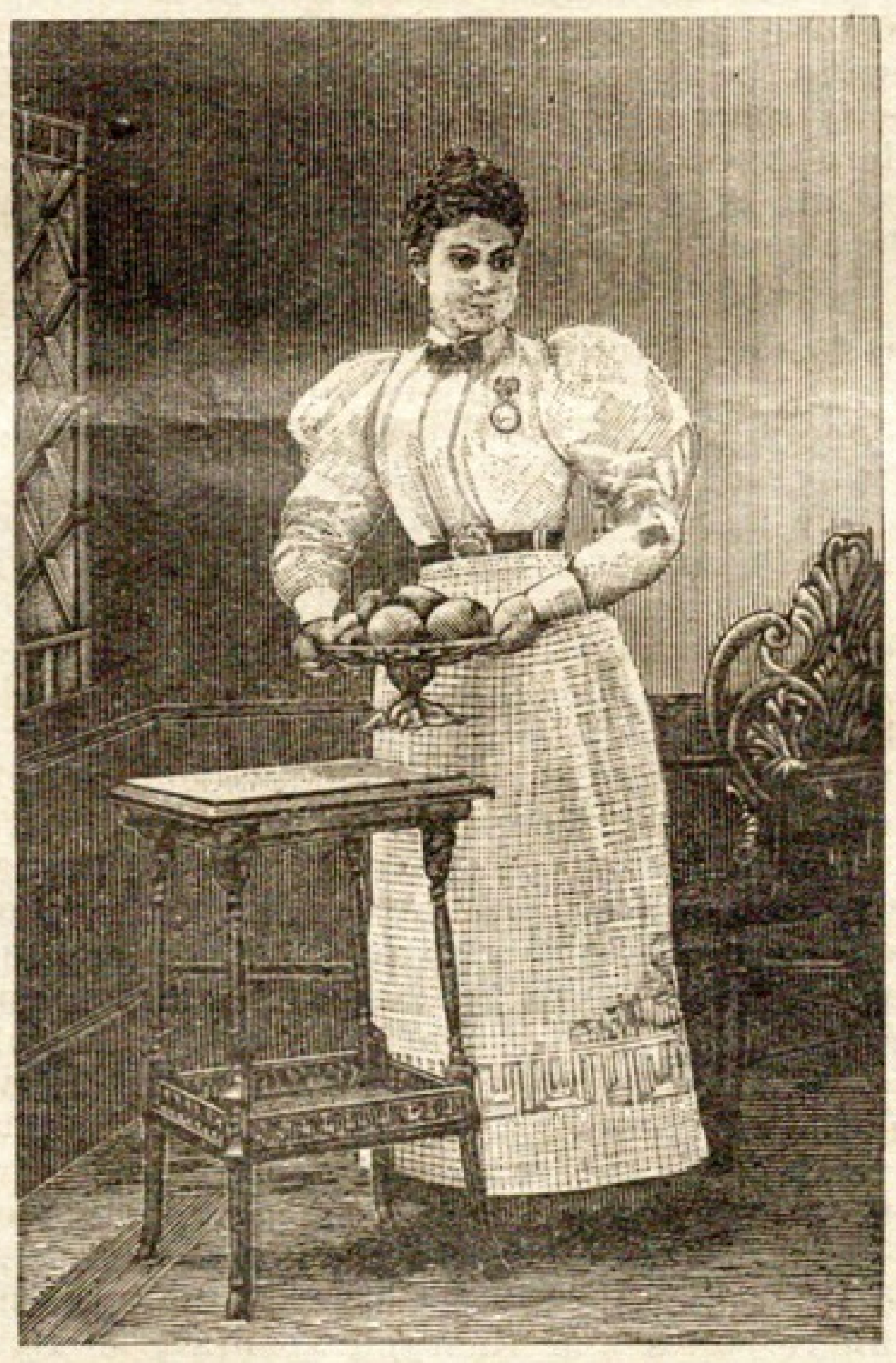
The Turks, as a matter of fact, are decidedly in the minority, as there are in European Turkey two million Turks, with more than three million Armenians, Greeks, Albanians and Bulgarians. The small provinces would hail with delight any invasion that would break the bondage of the Turk. Their adherence is secured only by ignorance and terror, and nothing would give them more joy than to break the shackles that bind them, even though they rush into a series of unknown and untried conditions. Anything to them is better than what now exists.

HOW WATCHES ARE WORN.

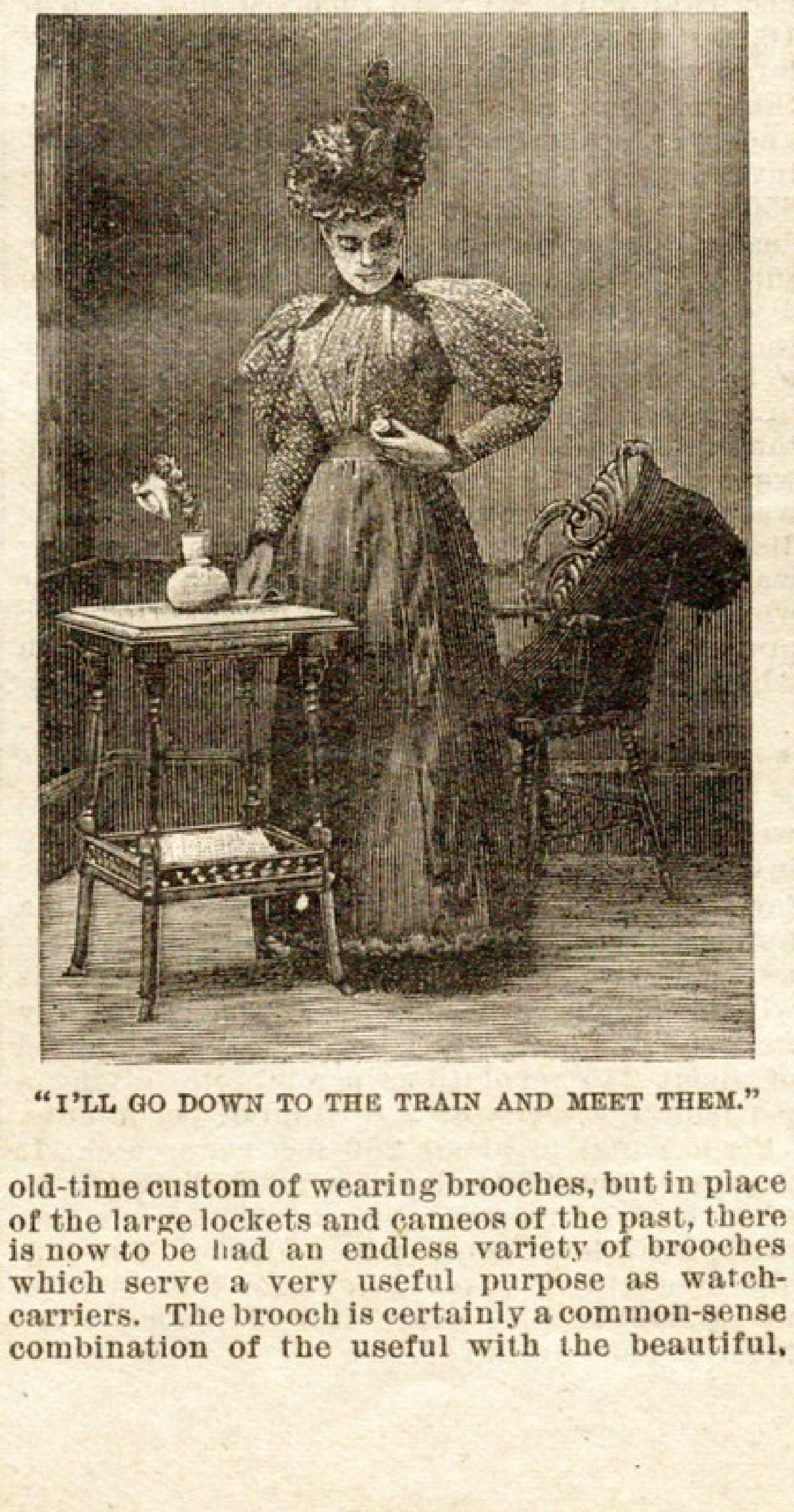
Dame Fashion has not been quick to welcome the ladies' watch. For a long time she has thwarted its introduction as an article for general wear, and loftily declared that "A lady did not need to measure time; it was her own to use as she pleased." The foreign watchmakers readily fell in with this idea by producing watches which were so free from any time-keeping quality that it has become natural for us to think of the beautiful little Swiss watches as "always out of order." No one thought of carrying one as a guide to time, and the watches found their place as more or less neglected boudoir ornaments. In an indignant moment Fashion issued a decree prohibiting pockets, and a banishment of the worthless watches was for a time enforced.


THE COLLEGE GIRL IS SURE OF HER TIME.

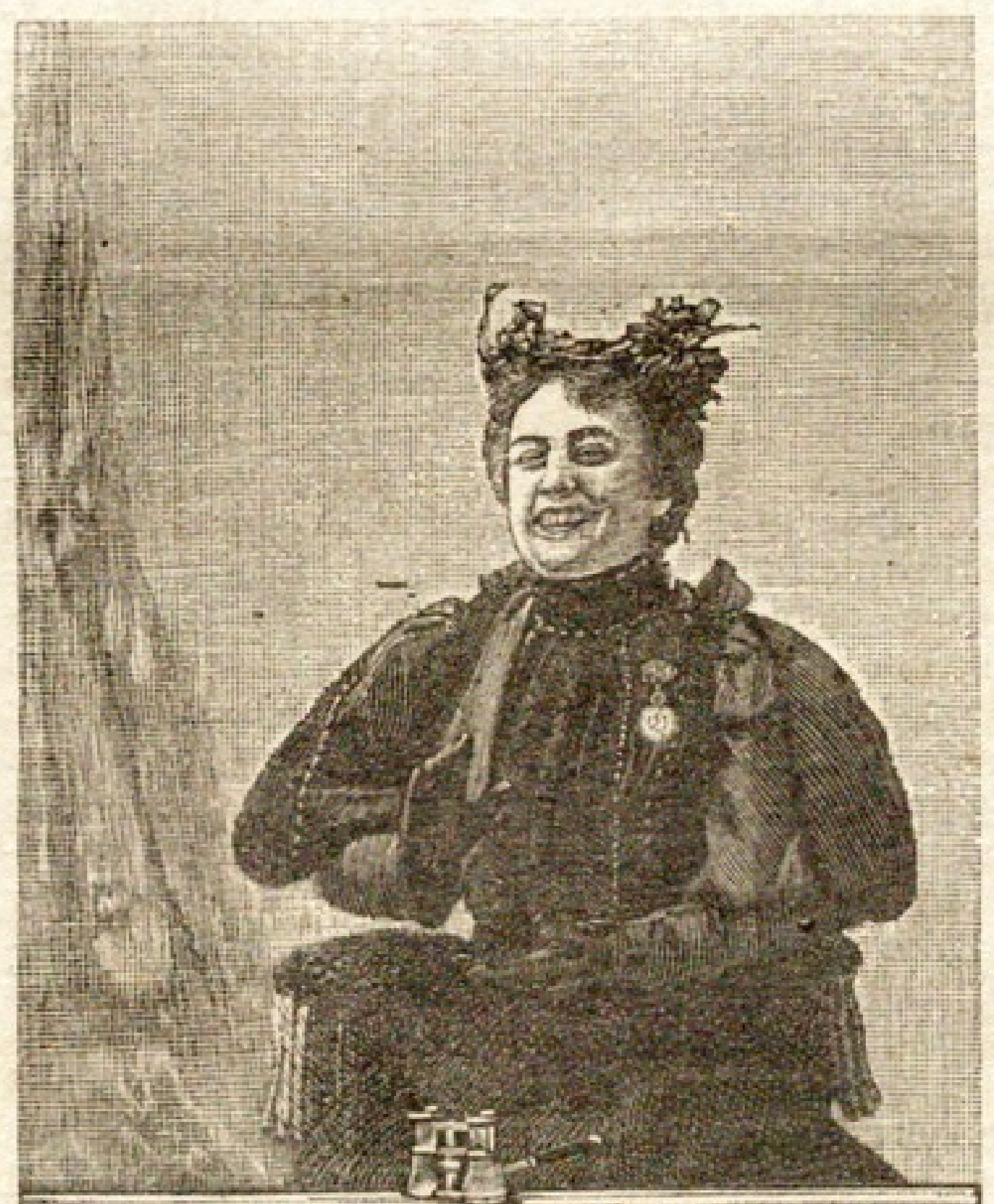
But the practical Connecticut Yankee comes along with a line that may be relied upon as time-keepers, and uses the best designs for cases that Paris art can suggest, producing a complete watch, and therefore able to guarantee it in every particular.


DINNER TIME.

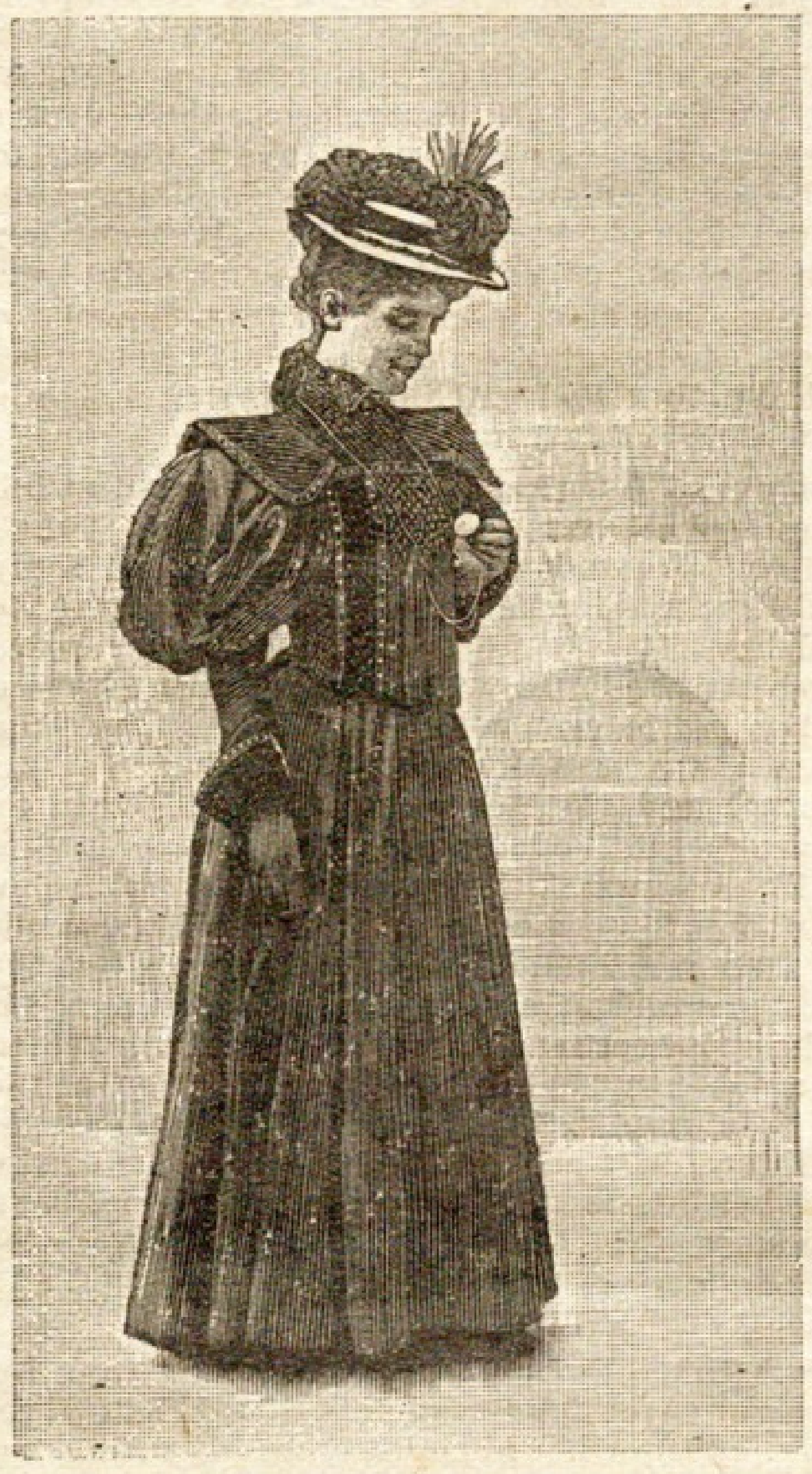
The prevailing beautiful styles in ladies' gowns with silk waists and large sleeves revives the old-time custom of wearing brooches, but in place of the large lockets and cameos of the past, there is now to be had an endless variety of brooches which serve a very useful purpose as watch-carriers. The brooch is certainly a common-sense combination of the useful with the beautiful, and it is not strange that it has become as much a part of a fashionable lady's gown as the big sleeves of the day. This is an age of time-keeping. The new woman has social if not business appointments to keep, and ought to be able to have a reliable watch, and find it readily without an embarrassing and vexatious search for it in hidden recesses.


"I'LL GO DOWN TO THE TRAIN AND MEET THEM."

The brooches may be had quite plain or richly designed and enameled in lovely tints on gold and silver, matching the designs of watches which are wondrous in variety. Nowadays, if one would be right up in style, she should have a watch for the full-dress gown as well as one for simpler occasions. Two watches cost less to-day than one formerly did, and the idea of having two or more watches may not now be considered more extravagant than the owning of two or more trinkets of the ordinary kind. The present-day dress watches, so various in design, should be described in a separate paper, and perhaps we may be asked for a description later on; but we must not get off from the subject at present before us.


MATINEE TIME.

The old-fashioned gold chain is so graceful an ornament that it is likely to be in fashion more or less for all time. Its use properly requires a small waist-pocket, so that it may be conveniently slipped in and out, and yet be reasonably secure. The Victoria fobs, with short chain and locket or other ornament, are used to some extent, the watch being tucked in the bodice, with or without a pocket to receive it, and the locket dangling from the buttonhole. Watches are awkward to get at when thus tucked away, always requiring the unfastening of one, and usually more, of the buttons to allow the watch to pass out. This is often embarrassing, and ladies admit that they have preferred, when in public places, to remain in ignorance of the time rather than resort to this method of getting at a watch. A simple and inexpensive black-silk chain, fitting around the neck and caught below the throat by a silver ornament, is in good taste. The watch may be attached to this by the usual catch, and slipped in the belt; though it may be put in the bodice if belt is not worn. In our illustration the watch is shown in belt, which is a handy way of carrying it.


READY FOR A WALK.

The brooch, however, is the most convenient and fashionable watch adjunct of to-day, and has undoubtedly come to stay. It is a charming ornament, holds the watch securely, and is easily pinned to the corsage, and so may be changed from one gown to another. It is an especial convenience to the housewife, who has for so many years had to depend upon a kitchen clock or the family heirloom timepiece, both of which were generally regulated by the sun. If one has a notion to go to the matinée, it is convenient to have a reliable timepiece where it may be conveniently referred to, while at the same time it is an attractive and very suitable ornament for such an occasion. A tiny "Elfin" watch, worn in the same way, is now a recognized feature for more dressy occasions. In every duty of life one should have a watch at hand—at home, at school, at social functions or at business. The college girl should be sure of her time, and the good housewife ought always to be prompt.

In our illustrations the watches shown are popular four-size "Addison" and "Birthday" series. These have always been popular sizes; but for finer-dress wear the tiny "Elfin," which is the smallest watch made in this country, is more appropriate.

◆

SOURCES OF CONTAGION.

A little girl, six years of age, was taken by her mother into a street car. The car was crowded, and a delicate-looking man lifted the little one to his knees. She sat there a moment, then slid down, and clung to her mother's skirts.

After they had left the car, she said:

"Mamma, I couldn't sit there, that man breathed in my face and made me sick."

For days afterward she complained that she could not get that dreadful taste out of her mouth. In due time she was attacked with typhoid fever and died.

There was no question whatever in the mind of the physician that the man who took the child up was in the first stages of typhoid. Believing that this disease could be transmitted by the breath, he took pains to make experiments. A sufferer from typhoid breathed a number of times into a glass vessel containing sterilized water. From this water cultures were made, and the true typhoid bacilli developed in enormous quantities.

It is generally supposed that typhoid is due to contaminated water, but experiments of this sort have made it certain that the breath, especially if thrown out suddenly as by coughing, is likely to be laden with the deadly germs. Indeed, physicians are becoming well satisfied that the lungs are constantly at work trying to extract from the blood and throw out all poisonous ingredients. This being the case, those who inhale the breath of a person suffering from almost any disease are liable to receive the germs and become infected with the same malady.

◆

THE POISONOUS EFFECTS OF BORAX.

Borax has become such a familiar household article, and enters into the composition of so many things in ordinary use, that it is interesting to note some experiments of a French physician who has made exhaustive investigation into the qualities of this much-used substance. The *British Medical Journal* says that "there are a considerable number of persons peculiarly susceptible to borax. In them loss of appetite was succeeded by burning pain in the pit of the stomach, dryness of the mouth, and eventually by nausea and vomiting. Borax also produces a remarkable dryness of the skin, which is found to favor, if not to cause, various skin diseases, especially eczema. The hair also becomes dry and may fall out, causing complete baldness. The most dangerous result of the use of borax, however, is its power of producing kidney disease, or of converting a slight disorder of the kidneys into a fatal malady." In view of the fact that borax as an ingredient in hair washes is extensively used, this warning does not come amiss. It is not impossible that, as many of the shampoo mixtures contain borax, this may account for baldness in men who habitually indulge in shampooing at the barber's. If eczema is the result of a regular use of borax, the question arises whether borax soap is not a menace to health and an article that should be restricted in its employment.

◆

A NEW TREATMENT FOR POTATOES.

Farmers and gardeners have been greatly annoyed by spots of rot that come on the outside of potatoes. They are like pits extending in but a little way, but are sufficient to destroy the beauty of the product and seriously affect its market price. Experiments made by the New Jersey Agricultural College have demonstrated the following points: "Manure increases the scab and soil rot. Lime increases the scab, but diminishes the soil rot and tends to make sweet potatoes round. Kainit diminishes the scab, but increases the soil rot. Sulphate of copper diminishes both scab and soil rot. Corrosive sublimate diminishes greatly the scab and soil rot. Sulphur is, all things considered, the best remedy for the scab and soil rot that the experiments suggest." The sweet potato should be planted in a mixture of earth and sulphur, the proper proportion being five parts of sulphur to one of earth. This is thoroughly mixed and scattered in a hill when the potato is put out. Irish potatoes may be rolled in sulphur and fine earth before planting, and sulphur may be scattered over the surface of the ground. It is much better in all cases to mix it with the earth, as otherwise it is likely to form lumps and is not equally distributed.

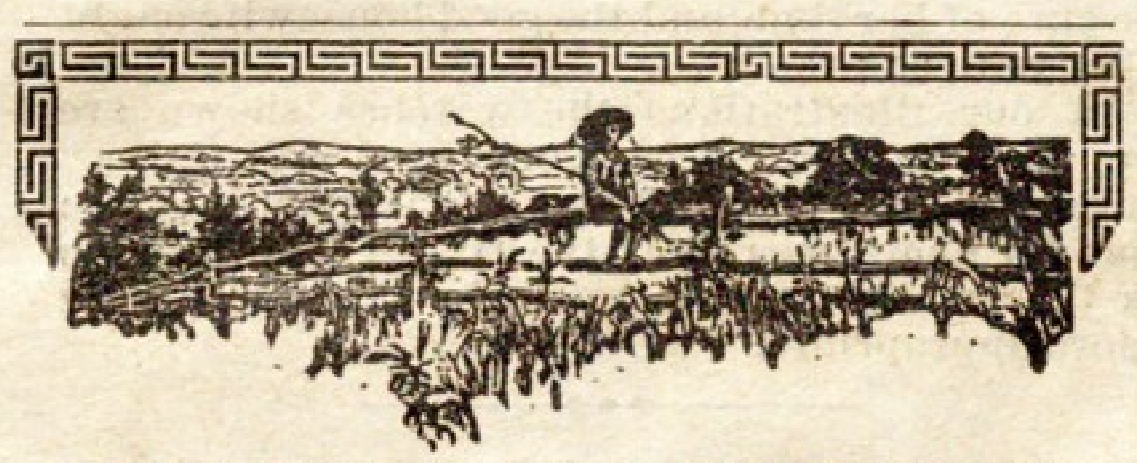
◆

AN ELECTRIC HEN.

The business of hatching chickens by artificial means is carried on so extensively that any improvement in the apparatus or methods is certain to attract the attention of all poultry raisers. The latest invention in this line is an electric apparatus. It is said that in this invention the temperature can be adjusted and maintained to a fraction of the desired pitch. The walls of the incubator are filled in with mineral wool. There is a hot-water tank at the top which keeps up the proper temperature by circulation. In these electric hens, as they are called, a resistance box may be used to heat the water, but they are made so that either oil, gas or electricity may be used. The idea of hatching chickens by electricity explodes the old theory that an electric current addled the eggs. This notion went out of fashion a long time ago with many other things, to which our ancestors clung with the utmost tenacity. It is thought that chicks raised in electric incubators have more strength and vitality than when brought out in the ordinary way. Several poultrymen are experimenting with electric brooders, and the results will be looked for with great interest.

◆

—In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it; for he that lives well cannot be despised.



CHILDREN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

A Poetical Afternoon.

It was a rainy day, and we had to stay in the house.

"Such a rainy day! We can't go out to play!" said Ida.

"You've made a rhyme," said Tom. "I can do it, too: 'Though she did not know it, Ida was a poet.'"

"Dear me!" cried Aunt Isabella, "what talented young people! Now, as I should like a little peace and quiet in order to exercise my own talents as letter-writer, I propose that you all go into the library and make verses this afternoon. I offer a prize of one big silver dollar for the best poem. All to be handed in at five o'clock—pen names only. That is, you are not to sign your own, and not to tell it until the decision is made."

"What a splendid idea!" said Ida. And we all thought so, and Aunt Isabella gave us each a pad of paper and a pencil, and away we went—Ida and Fanny, Kate and Tom and little Bob and Nannie, six of us.

Each took the seat he or she liked best, and each began to write. By five o'clock the waste-paper basket was full of torn scraps, and on the table lay six folded sheets of paper.

The rain still poured and the sky was gray, but the afternoon was gone like a dream, and we were now only anxious to hear the verses read. At five minutes past five auntie came in, lit the drop-lamp and told Tom to draw down the shades. Then, sitting in the large arm-chair, while we drew our chairs about the table, she took the first paper that came to hand, unfolded it and said:

"Now listen, all of you, to—

"A DISTICH ABOUT STITCHING.

"I do not like to sew,
It is very wrong, I know,
But I do not like to backstitch a long, white seam.
And to sit still and run
Is very little fun,
While of the pleasant, open fields I dream.

"How I hate a buttonhole,
Or a bodkin, like a mole,
Creeping blindly through a narrow little hem!
And to scallop doth appear
An amusement very queer
When I want to go and fish with brother Jem.

"Oh, cruel crewel stitch,
You make my fingers itch
To toss the horrid wools across the floor!
And I loathe you all, French dots,
And my silk gets into knots,
When the pleasant sunshine peeps in at the door.

"The pen-name signed to this," said Aunt Bella, "is 'Lazy Girl.' Here is the second poem:

"THE BLACK CHILD.

"'Little girl, little girl,'
Cried tiny Dolly May,
Seeing for the first, first time
A colored child that day,
'Did you meddle with the candle?
With the matches play?
Burn yourself all over black
Just like I did one day,
All my frock and pinafore?
Came you black that way?'

"This," said auntie, "is signed, 'Founded on Fact.'"

We all laughed. For we had a little cousin who had done just this thing. Then auntie read the third poem:

"THE NEW BABY.

"I've a brand-new baby brother,
So cunning and so brown,
His eyes are soft as velvet,
His skin like chicken-down,
And his little fists are doubled up so,
As if he would fight the town.

"All day he has cuddled up softly
Against my mamma't white gown,
Sometimes he goos, sometimes he cries,
And sometimes he will frown.
But he's always the cunningest baby
Of all the babies in town.

"'Bunting,' is signed to this," said my aunt; and as it was founded on fact also, we all laughed again. There were two more left, and Aunt Isabella read the smaller first. It was this:

"CHESTNUTS.

"Oh, it's fun to go a-Maying,
And 'tis fun to go a-haying,
And 'tis fun to gather wild-flowers
In the summer's prime;
But when the white frosts first
The chestnut burs have burst,
There is nothing like the nutting
In the autumn time."

"X. Y. Z." was signed to this.

"And here is the last of all," said Aunt Bella.

"PICKING BLACKBERRIES.

"'Come,' said he, 'the berries are black again.
Come,' said he, 'they are ripe and sweet.'
'Ah,' said she, 'I shall tear my gown again,
Scratch my fingers and hurt my feet.'

"'Oh, if you mind a thorn and a scramble,
Always must keep your apron neat,
If you're afraid of a scratch from a bramble,'
Said he, 'you cannot have berries to eat.'

"'Ah,' said she, with a shrug of her shoulder,
'You may fix it this way, if you please.
Gather the berries, since you are the bolder,
I'll wait till they're gathered, then eat at my ease.'

"'Country Boy' wrote that," said Aunt Bella. "Now to decide on the winner of the prize. In my opinion 'Lazy Girl' has written the best verses. No one must feel hurt; they are all very good for such young poets. So there is the dollar, Ida. I imagine that you wrote it, it expresses your sentiments so perfectly."

"But I did not," said Ida.

"It's mine," said Tom. "I've heard Ida say all that, and just versified it."

"I wrote 'Blackberries'—I'm 'Country Boy,'" said Ida. And Nannie was "Bunting" and Bob was "X. Y. Z." and Fanny was "Founded on Fact," and nothing was written by the person we thought it was. As for me, I'm Kate, and I did not give you my verses for fear you might laugh at them.

"We might have known 'Lazy Girl' was a boy," said Ida. "Because there is *no* crewel-stitch, only crewel-work, and for 'French dots' read 'French knots.'"

Then we all laughed again, and Tom treated everybody to ice-cream and chocolate caramels that evening.

Correspondence

Bicycle Suits.—Three girls are already making preparations for spring and want some hints on bicycle costumes. They are able to buy good ones and want to know all about an outfit. *Answer:* One of the best all-around materials is Cravenette either in black or colors. It is durable, handsome and rain-proof. Your skirt should be just three yards wide at the hem, and should go just to the instep in front and one inch longer at the back. Make it over a lining of mohair or similar goods, and have it fit rather loosely around the hips. A shirt waist and blazer is best liked by many ladies, but a blouse is preferred by others. A fitted waist is not approved by the best authorities. Make the sleeves extremely loose, especially at the armholes. A great deal of the trouble that doctors call incipient paralysis is due to tight armholes, and the strain of the muscles against ill-fitting clothing. Headgear is a vexed and vexing question. A cap, Tam O'Shanter or sailor, may be worn with perfect propriety. Each must choose that which is most becoming. Ladies who have trouble in keeping the hats on will find caps most comfortable. A light-weight sailor hat has advantages. One may wear a veil over the face and thus protect the complexion. It is a great advantage to wear gloves. Without them the hands soon become calloused and harsh as well as unsightly from tan and burn. Whatever you may do in the bicycle line, do not wear bloomers. They will, perhaps, be worn by women who are able and willing to disregard the conventionalities of life, but are looked upon as not especially lady-like or refined. Perhaps it is only "a notion," but, nevertheless, such "notions" are best observed by all well-bred young women. There will in due course of time be a well-established code of rules as to dress and manners on the wheel. Until that time one may as will avoid all extremes.

Dress for Receptions.—Carrie Way, twenty years old, is invited to a large evening reception, and wants to know what she should wear. She has fifty dollars to use for the occasion, and wants to make a fine appearance. The house where she is to go is handsome and the people are wealthy. What material would be best for the dress, and what else would be needed? Also a dress, costing a little more, for a lady of thirty-five, of fine figure and beautiful complexion? *Answer:* For yourself, Carrie, buy a crêpe in lemon-yellow, if you are dark; in cream-white, if you are fair. Trim it with an abundance of lace, for which you should pay no more than fifty cents per yard. If you like, buy glacé silk for lining the skirt, and if you are ingenious you may make it yourself. The waist you should have made by a professional, unless you have skill in doing your own things. Your dress should not cost over thirty or thirty-five dollars, if you are a good manager. You will want a pair of white shoes, three dollars; hose, two dollars or two dollars and a half; long gloves, two dollars and a half, and a fine handkerchief and fan. If you have some of these things, you can put more money into the dress. Perhaps it may be well to buy the smaller belongings first, then take what is left for the dress, reserving at least ten dollars for the over-cost that always comes when one must have things made out of the house. For your friend, have a plain, close-fitting Princesse dress of garnet velvet, cut low in the neck and edged with a little rich point lace. The same lace should form frills from the elbow-sleeves. Long gloves with fan and very fine, small handkerchief will finish a toilet that should be extremely becoming.

Points of Etiquette.—Hortense asks the following questions: "1. What should a young lady say when asked to dance, and what reply should she make when, the dance being over, the gentleman thanks her? 2. Is it proper for a young lady to dance with a gentleman to whom she has not been introduced? 3. When a young lady meets a gentleman with whom she is acquainted and they enter an elevated train together, should the lady allow the man to pay her fare?" *Answer:* 1. When asked to dance, a simple inclination of the head is all that is required; you then rise and take your places. When the dance is finished and the man expresses his thinks, it is best to say, in a frank and unaffected way: "It has been very enjoyable;" or, if the man is a good dancer, say: "It is a pleasure; you dance so well." 2. It is not good form to dance with a man to whom you have not been introduced. 3. The question of paying fares for ladies depends entirely upon circumstances. As a rule, it should not be permitted.

An Affair of the Heart.—Anxious Inquirer has never cared for the society of ladies until recently, but now he thinks he is deeply interested in a very sweet and lovely girl. He asks if he should continue his attentions as heretofore, or make the case special, or give it up altogether. *Answer:* If you are not in a condition to marry, you certainly should not show marked attentions to any girl. It is unjust to her and dishonorable on your part. If you are able to marry, the very best thing you can do is to set up your little home as soon as you can find some desirable girl who will become your wife.

Taking Up a Church Letter.—J. L. D. is a member of a church, and desiring to withdraw from it by letter, writes to the *Ledger* to ask how to word an application for the same, and if it is necessary to give a reason for the withdrawal. *Answer:* It is only necessary to address a letter to the pastor stating that circumstances make it desirable or necessary, as the case may be, to ask for a letter which he will greatly oblige you by sending to you at his convenience. While it is not arbitrary that you give a reason, one is usually asked. Of course, you can decline to answer if you choose.

An Old Book.—H. M. T. asks where a copy of "The Missing Bride" may be obtained? *Answer:* It is out of print, but may possibly be found at some of the old bookstores.

"Up the Spout."—Inquisitive wants to know what the expression "up the spout" means and where it originated. *Answer:* It is said to have had its origin in the custom of some of the largest pawn-shops having a sort of dumb-waiter or goods elevator on which parcels are carried to storage rooms on upper floors. The lower end is spout-shaped, hence the word and the idea "going up the spout."

Horses and Colts in the Bible.—Hilda and A Constant Reader ask where the horse is first mentioned in the Bible; also the colt. *Answer:* The first mention of the horse is in Genesis, chapter XLIX., verse 17. The colt is mentioned several times in the Bible, but not the horse's colt. The word first occurs in Genesis, chapter XXXII., verse 15, and refers to the camel's colt.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

Science

Utilizing Waste Products. For many years the slag from blast furnaces accumulated in unsightly piles, and no one knew what to do with it. Modern methods and modern machinery have, however, made it possible to work this hitherto useless and cumbersome heap into a substance that is of the highest value in many ways. The slag is melted in a large pot, from which it slowly trickles out through a spout. The instant it reaches the air it meets a high-pressure steam jet which blows it into shreds and carries it into a large storage bin, where it falls a mass of light, soft matter, which is called mineral wool. The force of the jet that carries it into the storage-room grades it by gravitation. The coarser and heavier parts drop near the entrance to the room, and those that are lighter proceed farther on, until at the extreme end a dust-like cloud is formed, which settles in a puffy mass like fine down. The product is then gathered up and packed in suitable receptacles for market. It is afterward made into articles of various sorts, and is extensively used for packing. As a material for deadening walls and covering steam pipes and cold-storage walls it is extremely valuable, being one of the best of non-conductors, and, of course, strictly fireproof. A variety of sandstone and certain rocks are melted and blown in the same way and for the same purpose. This is unquestionably one of the marvels of modern invention, and is as simple as the product is useful. A thousand pounds of wool per hour is the capacity of an ordinary plant.

The Germ Theory. What the world owes to Louis Pasteur the world's great vocabulary is incompetent to express. Through his researches, and those of the students who have come after him, the light has been turned upon what has hitherto been total darkness. Doubt, experiments and uncertainty have given way to precision and accuracy in diagnosis. As the farmer knows that the chinch-bug is the cause of his withered crops, so the physician knows that the bacillus of certain diseases brings about certain symptoms. The microscope is the physician's reliance. A few drops of blood, a bit of tissue, a little perspiration brought under the eye of this magic assistant will tell him at once the cause and progress of the disease. And it is not alone the physician who benefits by this knowledge. The farmer, the vineyardist, the dairyman, the stock-raiser, the cultivator of the silk-worm and the enthusiast on bees are alike indebted to the discoverer of the germ-origin of disease for invaluable aids in their business. A necessity of the near future is an improvement in microscopes and their cheapening, so that knowledge of germs may become more widespread. Every township should have its bacteriologist and its microscopic equipment. There is no study more interesting, and none that is so important to humanity.

Infected Milk. That typhoid fever may be spread by milk is proven by an epidemic of that disease that has during the past year occurred in Connecticut; 386 cases were reported in a town of 16,000 inhabitants. Children who partook largely of milk were usually the victims, as one-third of the whole number were among children under ten years of age. As a point of interest, investigation showed that out of the 386 cases 350 were in families who took milk of the same dealer. Other patients had milk from the same supply, but through second or third hands. The disease did not break out in the families either of the dealer or the producer, therefore there seemed to be a natural inference that the cows were not in any way diseased, but that the milk was contaminated by having the cans washed in impure water. It is the custom of some milkmen to wash their cans in boiling water in which soda is dissolved, then afterward rinse them in boiling water. If this were done, one source of danger would be removed, as boiling destroys a large proportion of the various disease germs with which water may be infected.

A New Fly-Wheel. The tendency of fly-wheels to disintegrate from centrifugal force is well understood. This peculiarity has led to the invention of a new fly-wheel that is said to be far superior to anything previously used. To a hub is attached wound wire filling the space between disks about twenty feet in diameter. This wire is number five steel wire and is securely fastened in place. The wheel is driven at a speed of about 240 revolutions per minute, giving a peripheral velocity of 2 8-10 miles per minute. This is equal to about 250 feet per second. It requires about 250 miles of wire to fill the disks of a wheel of this size. Among the experiments under consideration are paper wheels. The tensile strength of paper is greater than that of many metals, and paper rims on wheels are looked upon with favor.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

All questions which may be asked on the subjects treated in this Department will be answered in the Correspondence column.

Fashion and Fancy. While there are frequent attempts made to modify and reconstruct the styles of the skirts of dresses, very little progress seems to be made in this direction. One may wear a skirt of reasonable walking length and reasonably full. The skirt holds the balance of common sense in the costume. It is plain, simple, stylish, and, if properly managed, need not be too heavy. Of course, one may use heavy linings and facings if preferred, but there are materials that serve the purpose admirably without making the weight of the skirt a burden. As a skirt lining, silk enjoys a decided popularity, but it is not durable, and for this reason ladies who make up dresses of serviceable material prefer some other lining. An excellent plan, if one desires the feel and rustle of silk, is to line the skirt regularly with good percaline, then put a couple of deep flounces of silk in the inside, or make a facing of silk from the knees down, with pinked ruffles at the hem. The paper linings about which so much has been said have not been as satisfactory to many women as they could wish. The stuff drags out of shape and wears off, and for skirts is not to be recommended. It does very well for sleeves and for the linings of capes and outside garments; but anything that has the constant swaying, swinging and grinding to which skirts are subject requires something more lasting than the majority of these makeshifts.

Waists in general shape and make-up are very much alike. They are close-fitting, and most of them have a bodice of the same sort; but the diversity in trimming and finish is almost without limit. A favorite style has the front cut out from the shoulder seams down the front to the bust. This is filled in with plaitings, shirrings, puffings, or soft folds of some thin or contrasting material.

Velvet waists are much liked, with the filling-in of muslin, lace or crépon. One waist is cut out in this fashion, and has a filling of lace, with deep lace ruffles from the lower edge of the yoke-shaped front almost to the bodice point. A plain waist of velvet has the front cut out in shield shape, and filled in with butter-colored lace. Over this there are ribbon straps, with bows on either side. Safety-pins are put on the under side of these bows, which are then fastened in place. One may have half a dozen ribbon garnitures to a dress, and thus secure great variety in effect.

A handsome waist is made of blue velvet and white lace. The sides and back of the bodice are of velvet. The full-length vest is of lace. There is a fancy belt, below which is a lace ruffle about ten inches wide falling over the skirt. The sleeves are made of alternate strips of velvet and lace, and there is a straight collar and high rolling collar of velvet. Sleeves made of alternate sections as just described are quite popular for dressy wear. One beautiful costume of striped brocade has the sleeves put together in this way. There is a stripe of brocade, then a band of lace of the same width, and so on alternating until the required size is secured. These pieces are then gathered very full at the shoulders and elbows.

Many of the new sleeves have nothing below the elbows save a full frill of lace or embroidered muslin or chiffon. A stylish and handsome bodice for a young lady is made of brocade with gold figures on a rose-colored ground. The sleeves are full puffs. The cuffs are of shirred lace drawn in with bands of ruby velvet. A full standing collar of lace encircles the back of the neck and is plaited on down the front to the belt, which is of ruby velvet, and has a large bow on either side of the front. These large side-bows, by the way, are only suitable for slender figures. Ladies who are the least inclined to be stout should avoid them, as they cut off the curves which full figures rely on for style and effectiveness. There is a great deal of trimming used, which has almost a barbaric suggestion, or, as one writer expresses it, "Reminds one of horse-trappings of the early ages." There are sequins, spangles, nail-heads and embroideries in gold and silver bullion on leather, cloth and velvet. These are used for waist-trimmings, vests, collars and cuffs. The use of ornaments of this sort is rapidly running to excess, but one need employ them only moderately and in very small quantities, and if of good quality they certainly have their uses.

Fashion Notes. Among the favorite color combinations are pale gray or pearl and a medium shade of old-fashioned purple. A costume of this kind has a basque waist of purple velvet and a skirt of gray cloth. The deep yoke, collar and vest are of metal embroidery in gray and gold, also a trimming down the front of the skirt of the same embroidery.

A stylish shoulder cape is made of tan-colored plush. There is a yoke of shirred satin of the same color, a collar of leather and spangles, and around the shoulders where the cape portion and the yoke join there is an extremely full box-plaited ruching of the plush with a heading of the garniture like the collar. The wrap is lined with blue figured brocade.

Most of the new capes need straps to keep them from dragging. Just why some capes should pull back and others drag over in front, no one seems to know, but all the same they do, and wide straps firmly attached at the back of the neck and passed over the shoulders and back under the arms, are indispensable to comfort.

It is a curious fact that bracelets have gone so entirely out of use that many wholesale dealers in jewelry do not carry them at all. Of course, in fine stocks there are always more or less of these ornaments; but, as a rule, they receive very little attention.

Yokes, collars, cuffs and vests of white broadcloth, embroidered in wreaths of roses, are among the novelties. These are used with bright-colored silks, satins or velvets.

WOMAN'S WORLD.

(Continued.)

Gloves are an important item in my lady's outfit. They must be long, extending some distance above the elbows, in some cases to the shoulders. They are not very tight-fitting. Indeed, an exceedingly close-fitting glove is not thought to be in the best style. They are almost without ornament, some of the best qualities having merely the fine stitching at the back of the hand.

Fur edgings around the hems of skirts are going out of favor. They are untidy and unsanitary. They gather up everything objectionable on the street that can possibly attach to such material. A little dampness makes them exceedingly unsightly and they wear off very quickly, giving them a spotted and mangy appearance.

There is nothing prettier for dressy wear than skirts with silk ruchings at the hem. These are not specially expensive, and may be renewed at pleasure. It is the mark of a true gentlewoman never under any circumstances to wear anything that suggests untidiness.

For information, thanks are due to Messrs. James McCreery & Co., Arnold, Constable & Co. and H. O'Neill & Co.

Common-Sense Observations. A physician who has made a specialty of the study of affections of the skin, in conversation with a patient the other day, made some statements that would be more useful as beauty hints than all of the theories and notions ever put forth by dealers in cosmetics and complexion specialties.

"It is a very great mistake," he said, "to suppose that most of the blemishes and spots that disfigure faces are attributable to disorders of the blood or constitutional troubles. Nine-tenths of these annoyances arise from outside irritations. The secret of a good complexion is absolute cleanliness. People get heated and in a perspiration, and the pores of the skin open; then the face is wiped off with a sleeve, perhaps, or the corner of an apron or a handkerchief that may be covered with dust or disease germs of all sorts. It is a fact not generally understood that a handkerchief used by any person suffering with throat troubles or a lung disease of any kind should never be applied to the face when it is heated or damp from perspiration.

"Our knowledge of disease germs is as yet in its infancy, but we know quite enough to warn us that a microbe from a diseased throat or lungs might find a lodging-place in an open pore of the skin and create an irritation and cause pimples and eruptions, disfiguring and uncomfortable.

"One of the surest ways to preserve the complexion is to wash the face thoroughly, and, before drying it, rub into it a mixture of equal parts of glycerine and listerine. Listerine is distinctly a germ destroyer, and glycerine acts as a guard and coating to keep out intruders. The little eruptions and pimples that come on the face are spread by contagion, or, perhaps more properly speaking, by inoculation. It is frequently the case that they are carried from one part of the face to another by the hands. There is a feeling of annoyance, a slight itching maybe, and, with the finger-nail, one simply removes a portion of the colony of germs that have settled at this point. A moment later some other part of the face may be touched, and if a pore is in the right condition, the germs attached to the finger-nails are left there, and a flourishing tribe is the immediate result. There are constitutions so strong and in such a healthful condition that nothing will flourish on the surface of the skin. The system has the power to resist and throw off all accumulations of this kind. The subject simply stands in this way, that if the individual is in excellent health these germs will not live, even though they may find a resting place on the surface.

"It is a fact understood by every one that delicate animals and children are a prey to parasites, whereas healthy ones may not be annoyed at all. Constant attention to the condition of the skin and absolute cleanliness are, therefore, the best cosmetics. When, however, this form of bacteria has found a lodgment in the skin, nothing remains but external treatment. All the medicines in the world may be powerless to exterminate them. Eruptions that have come to a head should be opened with a very sharp knife or needle, the contents pressed out, and the surface thoroughly washed with castile soap and a soft brush, then a treatment of listerine and glycerine is one of the best applications. It must be borne in mind, and cannot be too strongly emphasized, that glycerine should never be put on a dry skin. Rub the skin thoroughly with a damp cloth, then immediately apply the lotion.

"Pimples and eruptions are, as a rule, curable by continued and persistent application of dioxide of hydrogen. This preparation, diluted about half, and rubbed into the face, especially the irritated spots, is a most excellent remedy. If this course were carefully followed, there would be very little trouble about blackheads, pimples and other unsightly appearances on the face."

Tomato Sauce. When fresh tomatoes are out of season, use canned. Put a can of tomatoes in a stew-pan on a slow fire until cooked. Cut through one carrot, a small onion, one ounce of salt pork and one ounce of raw ham. Put these into a saucepan with one ounce of butter, stir on the fire until the butter turns clear. Add an ounce of flour and cook a little longer. Add the tomatoes and a pint of white broth, mix well, season with salt, pepper, a little parsley and half a teaspoonful of sugar. Cover and boil slowly for forty minutes, stirring occasionally. Rub through a fine sieve, boil again, skim, and finish with one ounce of butter.

Fried Celery. Take a bunch of celery, pare off the green stalks, trim the roots and boil in slightly salted water with a little butter. Drain on a cloth, season with salt and pepper, dip in a batter and fry pretty crisp in plenty of very hot fat. Drain and serve with tomato sauce.

Patterns.

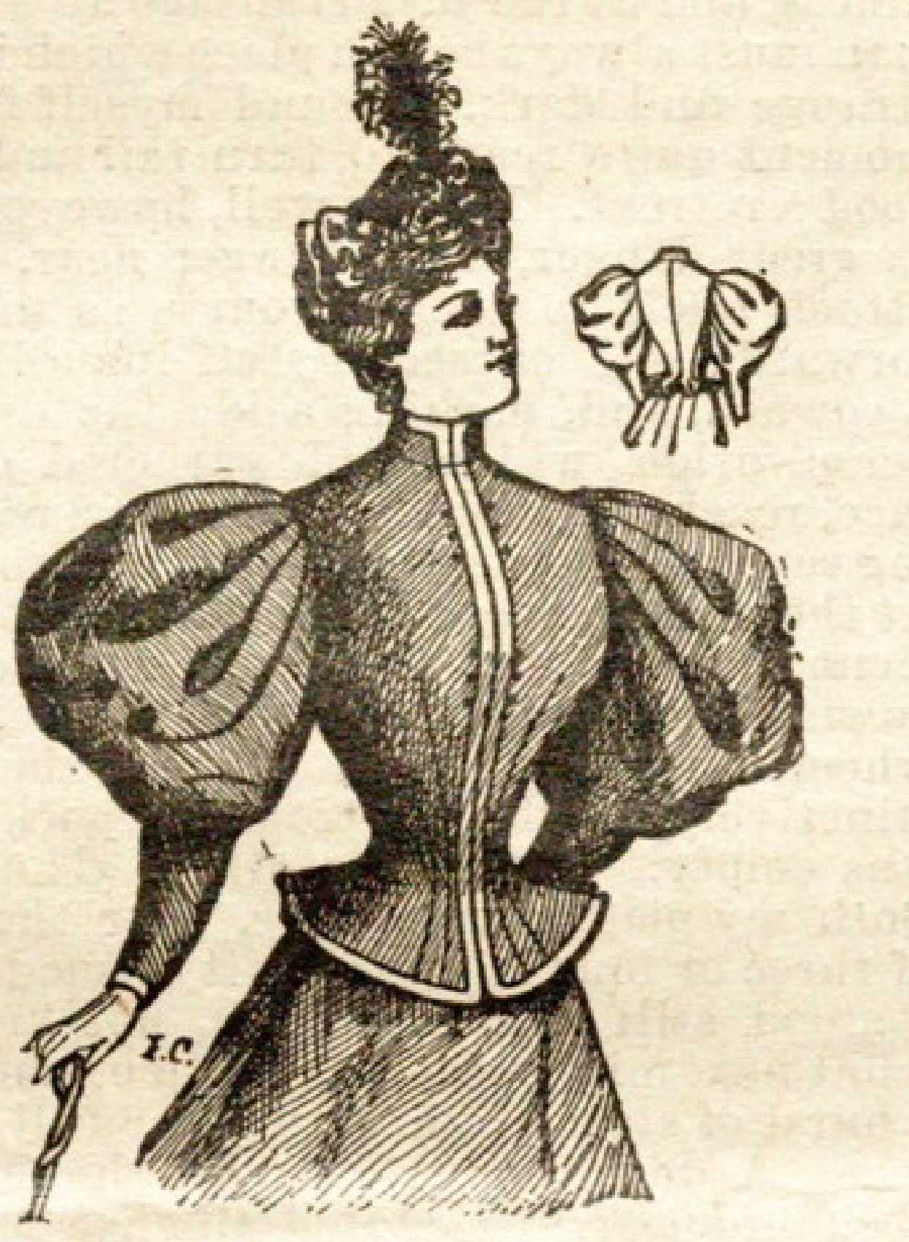
We have made special arrangements by which we can supply our readers with dress-patterns by mail, prepaid, at the nominal price of ten cents per pattern.

Each issue of the *Ledger*, hereafter, will contain illustrations of two or more new styles, for which patterns will be supplied to order. Parties ordering will please use a small sheet of plain writing-paper, small enough to go into an ordinary envelope, write name very plainly and give post-office and State, together with street and number, wherever necessary. Be careful to give correct bust-measure and the number of the pattern desired, using the number under the illustration. Inclose ten cents in stamps for each pattern ordered. State that you are a reader of the *Ledger*, otherwise these patterns will cost you 25, 30 or 35 cents each, as the case may be, these being the regular prices for which the patterns are sold.

The patterns selected for illustration in this issue are numbered 6632, 6613 and 6611.

Ladies' Ripple Basque.

Mordore cheviot and beige-color-faced cloth are stylishly associated in this plain, tailor-finished basque, which is one of the newest modes. The adjustment is glove-fitting to the waist-line, below which the fashionable flute-like effect at the sides and back is produced by the shaping, the fronts and sides fitting easily. A high military collar finishes the neck. The edges are finished with bias bands or straps of light cloth, and the closing is made invisibly in center front with hooks and eyes, small dull-gilt buttons being placed on each side in groups of three, as shown. The full gigot sleeves are fashioned with a single seam and arranged to droop in graceful wrinkles over comfortable two-seamed linings, the wrists being completed with a band of the beige cloth and three small buttons. To wear under short capes or cape collars of fur the mode here represented is very popular, as it is becoming alike to all figures and can be given infinite variety by the addition of fancy collars, cuffs, and other toilet accessories now fashionable. A close-fitting under-vest of chamois renders it warm enough for street wear. Basques in this style can be made up smartly from all varieties of smooth or rough-faced cloth, cheviot, tweed, covert suiting, serge, diagonal or whipcord, and edged with braid or bands of cloth, or with the edge plainly stitched in tailor fashion. The closing can be made with buttons and buttonholes if so preferred.



6632—LADIES' RIPPLE BASQUE

Pattern **6632** is cut in six sizes, viz.: 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure.

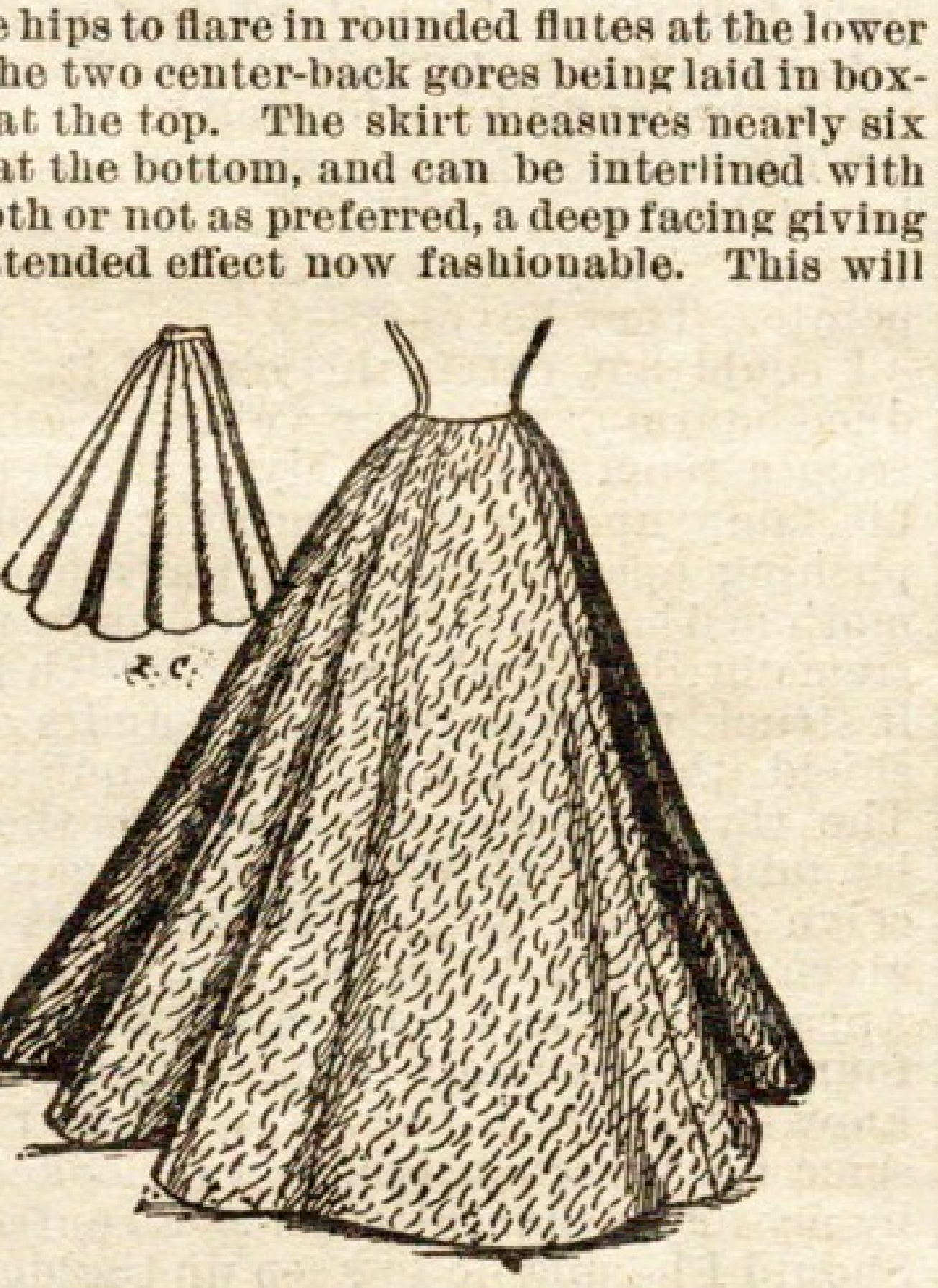
Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

For 32 inches bust measure	3 yds.
" 36 " " "	3¼ "
" 40 " " "	3½ "
" 42 " " "	3¾ "

Retail price of pattern **6632** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Ladies' Nine-Gored Skirt.

Fancy black Jacquard cloth is the material represented in this stylish skirt that is shaped with nine gores and closed in center back. The front and three side-gores narrow at the top and fit smoothly at the waist, widening gradually below the hips to flare in rounded flutes at the lower edge, the two center-back gores being laid in box-plaits at the top. The skirt measures nearly six yards at the bottom, and can be interlined with haircloth or not as preferred, a deep facing giving the distended effect now fashionable. This will be found a good model for silk, satin, velvet or other narrow-width fabrics, or in making over skirts they can be widened with front and second side-gores of contrasting material with stylish effect. Each seam can be piped or decorated with braid, passementerie, gimp or stitched bands of cloth, if a more elaborate finish is desired. Crépon, smooth and boucle-faced cloth, serge, cheviot, and the many varieties of plain and fancy mixed fabrics will develop stylishly by the mode.



6613—LADIES' NINE GORED SKIRT

Pattern **6613** is cut in five sizes, viz.: 22, 24, 26, 28 and 30 inches waist measure.

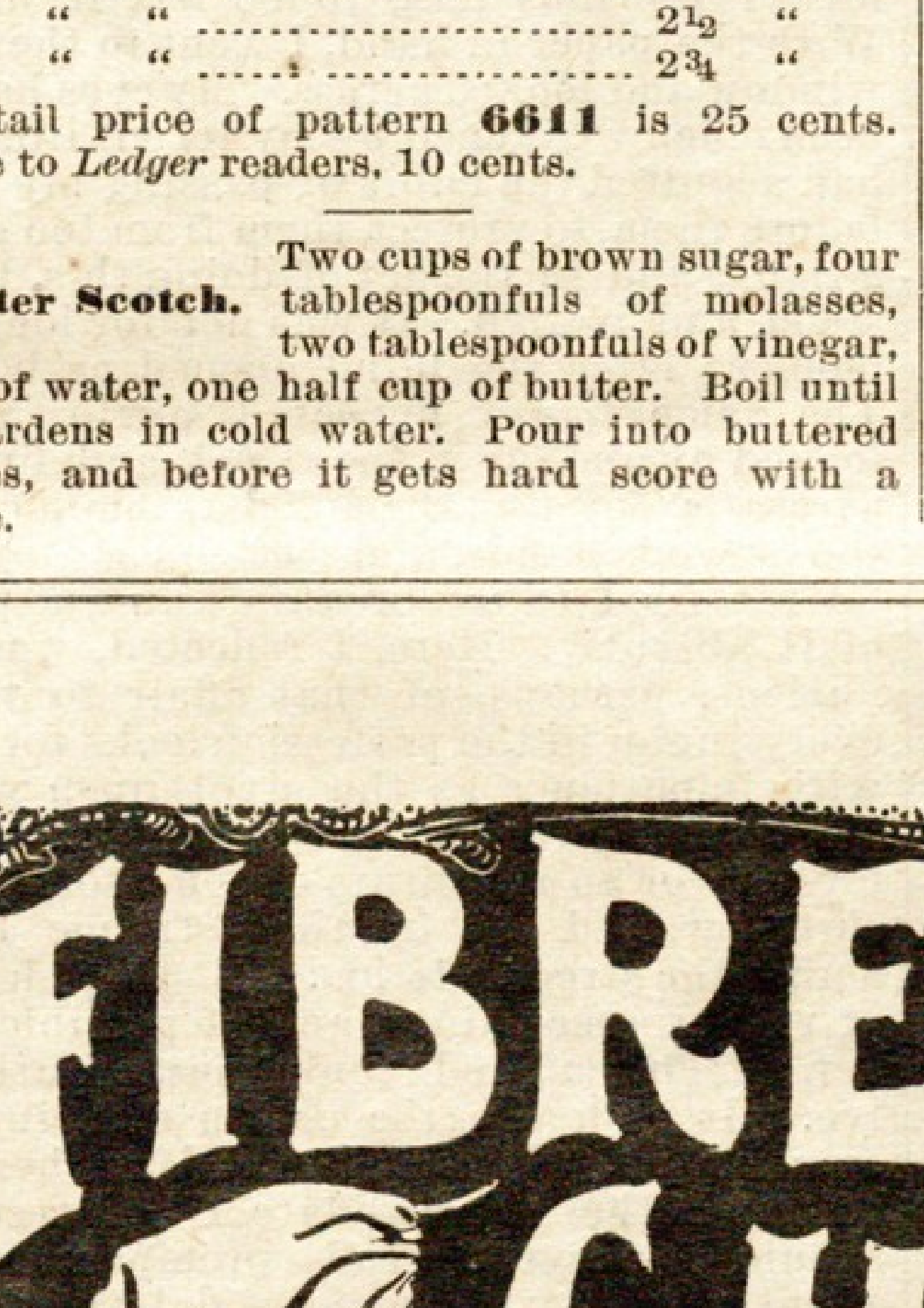
Quantity of Material 22 Inches Wide.

For 22 inches waist measure	10¼ yds.
" 26 " " "	10½ "
" 30 " " "	10¾ "

Retail price of skirt pattern **6613** is 30 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Misses' Waist.

Red and blue checked wool suiting is here stylishly combined with red cashmere and blue-faced cloth, handsome pearl buttons decorating the fronts. The double sailor collar has the under portion of red and the upper of blue cloth, the under sleeves being of blue with wrist facings of red rolled over for cuffs. This pretty waist is arranged over smooth fitted linings that close in center front, the full fronts and back being smooth at the shoulders and gathered at the waist-line. The full vest is gathered in a double row of shirring at the top and falls in blouse style over the belt at the waist. It is sewed to the lining under the right and hooks over under the left front. A crush collar finishes the neck, meeting with end frills in back, a belt to match being worn around the waist. Full puffs are mounted over comfortable sleeve linings and droop stylishly at the elbow, the deep facings fitting closely to the wrists. Different color combinations can be stylishly effected by the mode, which is suitable for all dress fabrics.



6611—MISSES' WAIST

Pattern **6611** is cut in four sizes, for Misses of 10, 12, 14 and 16 years of age.

Quantity of Material 44 Inches Wide.

10 years old	2¼ yards.
14 " "	2½ "
16 " "	2¾ "

Retail price of pattern **6611** is 25 cents. Price to *Ledger* readers, 10 cents.

Butter Scotch. Two cups of brown sugar, four tablespoonfuls of molasses, two tablespoonfuls of vinegar, two of water, one half cup of butter. Boil until it hardens in cold water. Pour into buttered plates, and before it gets hard score with a knife.

Strictly Co-operative. Somebody has asked the question: Which is proper—for the husband to kiss the wife or the wife to kiss the husband, when leaving home in the morning or returning in the evening?

It is one of the curiosities of human nature that a question of this sort should ever be thought of. Kisses are a strictly co-operative commodity except in the case of babies, who do not know any better, and in the case of a kiss of respect, where the lips merely touch the forehead or the hand.

There should be no such thing as one-sided kissing between husband and wife. When it comes to that, the operation is better omitted altogether. As a rule, there is altogether too much kissing going on, and a reform in this direction is imperatively demanded; but like a great many other things, there is little probability of any change.

Young people are much given to this form of amusement, and, doubtless, will be as long as the world stands.

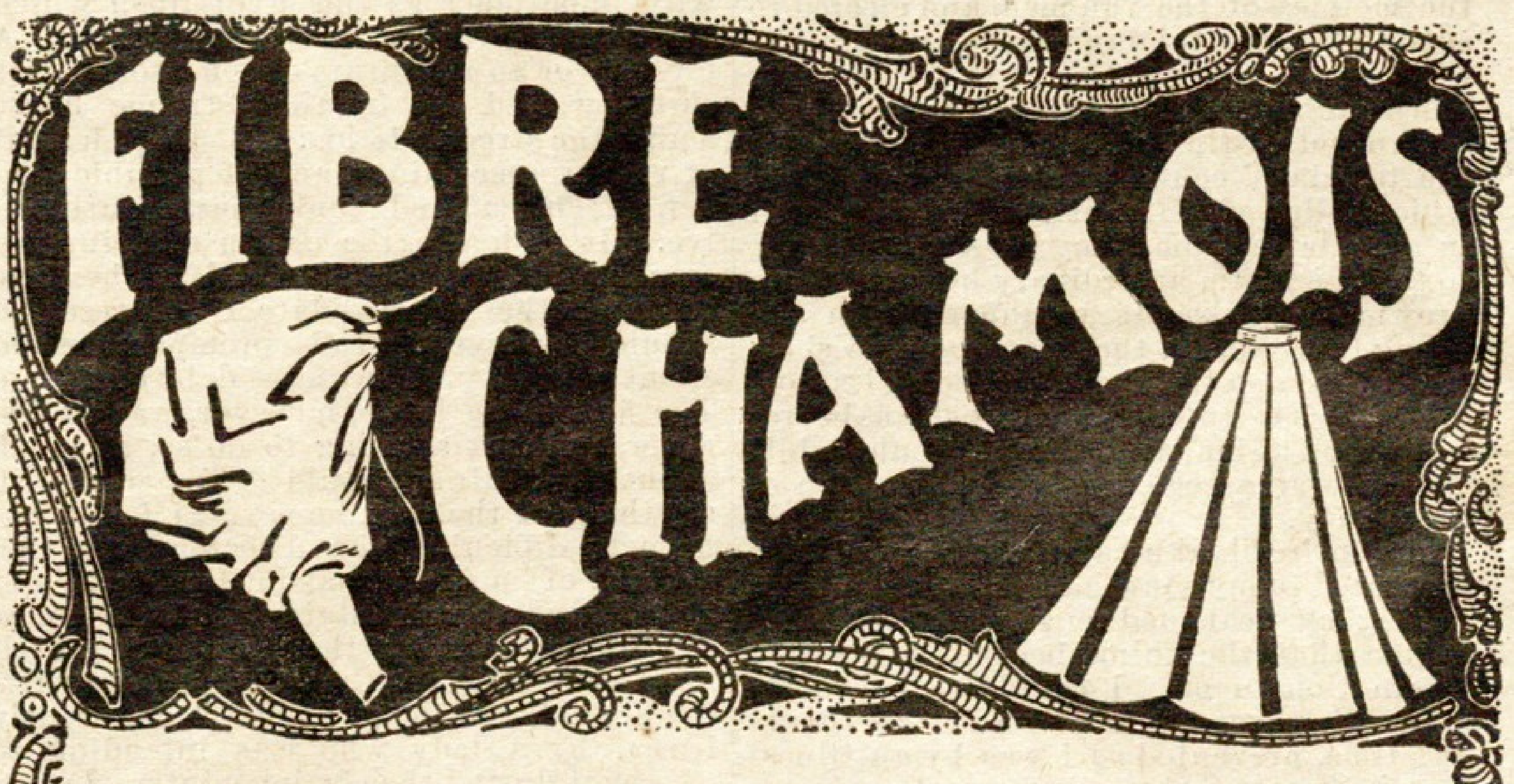
Potato Omelet. Beat four eggs, whites and yolks separately, very light. Have some Irish potatoes, mashed perfectly smooth, and add to the eggs until about the consistency of pound cake. Season with salt, pepper, and a little onion, if liked. Drop on a well-greased griddle a spoonful at a time. Turn and cook quickly. This is delicious.

Brussels Sprouts. Pick about two quarts of small, firm sprouts, wash well and boil in slightly salted water until tender, cool and drain. Melt four ounces of butter in a large pan, put in the sprouts, salt and pepper, set on a brisk fire and toss the pan until the sprouts are heated through. Add chopped parsley and lemon-juice and serve.

Cream Toast with Poached Eggs. Prepare toast as usual. Lay each slice in a saucer before adding dressing, and then finish with a delicately poached egg. Eggs broken into separate sauce dishes or patty pans, and steamed until the whites are set, will present a more appetizing appearance than when dropped into water.

Barley Cream. Wash a cup of barley, put it on the fire with water to cover it, boil gently until it is soft. While boiling, put in a stick of cinnamon or any other seasoning. When the barley is soft and thick take it off and strain it, then add a rich boiled custard, sweeten to taste. Add a glass of wine and serve frozen or not, as preferred.

Fig Pudding. Chop half a pound of figs and mix with a tea-cup of grated bread-crumbs, a teacupful of sugar, two tablespoonfuls of melted butter, four eggs, beaten light, and five ounces of candied orange and lemon peel. Turn into a greased mold, steam two hours and a half. Serve with pudding sauce.



Redfern,
Ladies' Tailor and Habit Maker.
210 Fifth Ave., New York.

American Fibre Chamois Co., Times Bldg., N.Y.

GENTLEMEN:
We enclose a letter received a few days ago, from Miss Lillian Russell, which we think may be of service to you. Yours truly,
(SIGNED) REDFERN.

What Lillian Russell Thinks of Fibre Chamois.

318 West 77th St.,
NEW YORK, August 14, 1895.

Messrs. Redfern, 210 Fifth Ave.

GENTLEMEN:—Kindly make up for me the gown I selected yesterday, using as you suggested the Fibre Chamois in the waist for warmth, and in the skirt and sleeves to give them that very stylish and bouffant effect. I find that the moreen petticoat does not give half the style that the genuine Fibre Chamois does. So naturally use nothing but the genuine goods. The imitation of this particular article I have found to be worse than useless.

Truly yours, (SIGNED) LILLIAN RUSSELL.

THE HOUSE WITH THE GREEN BLINDS.*

BY ELIZABETH N. BARROW.

CHAPTER I.

For a year I had passed it on an average of twice every day. I had given it the casual notice one naturally accords a house of somewhat unusual appearance in a great city where the inevitable brownstone holds dominant sway in the endless rows of streets, and where even an irregularity in the bell-pull is conspicuous.

The air of complete desertion and solitude which hung about the place in a street where everything else was teeming with energy and life had often called forth a wandering speculation to my mind. I wondered how long it had stood so, idle; what state of former magnificence, now falling to decay, was hidden behind those green shutters; whether it would ever again throw them open to the air and sunny cheerfulness which its neighbors enjoyed.

I was at the time a junior member of a private firm of detectives, with headquarters in Fifth Street, and with, on my own part, a vast amount of conceit concerning the importance of my chosen profession. I had, as it then seemed to me, a natural bent toward the foxy game of getting in my nose and then making the body follow; while a fondness for adventure and a leaning toward anything in the way of the mysterious gave me the notion that I was particularly adapted to the work. I was, besides, a young man of strong athletic habit, energetic and determined to make my mark in the world, my fortune, which usually is put forward first, being already sufficiently assured.

I lived in a bachelor apartment in East Thirty-sixth Street. It had been my home for three years, and it was, therefore, with a good deal of annoyance and chagrin that I received from my landlord, at the end of this time, the intelligence that no leases were to be renewed, as the old building was about to give place to a new business block.

I had, therefore, to look about for a new place in which to set up my Penates, and in this quest my late landlord was able to render me good service. He recommended to me a house which stood directly facing my friend of the Green Blinds. Upon investigation, I found the place to be admirably suited to my needs, and a week later found me as comfortably installed in my new quarters as a young bachelor could hope to be. In order, however, to escape from the actual moving of my effects from the old place to the new, I had left everything to the mercies of the van men, and elected to spend the eventful day in playing tennis at the C—— Club, up the river. From this place I returned at night, accompanied by a severe and obstinate attack of *la grippe*. In the ten days' confinement to my new home which followed, I frequently amused myself in speculating about my *vis-a-vis*. It was, to tell the truth, an ordinary house enough, brownstone, like its neighbors, with the usual four stories, the heavy outside shutters, always so tightly closed, being its most distinctive feature. The entrance was boarded over on a line with the vestibule, while even the area region presented no sign of occupancy.

The entire blankness which the front thus presented to my view had the effect of annoying my weakened sensibilities to such a degree that the thing became a positive fascination to me. I could scarcely keep my eyes or even my mind off it. For hours at a time, prevented as I was by an illness from any more serious diversion, I sat in my window, gazing across the hot street. Sometimes I smoked, oftener I did nothing, until the lazy action of the light or the soothing monotony of the street sounds lured me finally to sleep.

It was when in this semi-somnolent condition, one afternoon at the end of my convalescence, that I was startled by a very unusual manifestation. My half-closed eyes had been lazily scanning the green blinds for some moments when, suddenly, one of the blinds on the third-story middle window opened to its full width, disclosing to my view the head and shoulders of a man. For an instant I saw him plainly. A strange figure, small—judging his height from that of the window—a dried, attenuated face, with sharp eyes glancing this way and that, a white shirt or bed-gown seemingly his main attire, while a cotton night-cap ludicrously framed his face. After a hurried scrutiny of the street, his eyes fastened themselves upon me; a thin, nervous hand went with a half hesitating movement two or three times across his forehead, and then the blinds closed with a snap, leaving the space blank and impenetrable as before. Being half inclined to doubt the evidence of my own senses and to think that I had been dreaming, for some minutes I allowed myself to watch conspicuously for a repetition of this strange occurrence. Nothing more, however, appeared.

On the third day, with my breakfast, a letter was brought to me. It was unaddressed, and the maid told me that a messenger boy had just left it, with the instruction that it was to be given to the gentleman in the third-floor front. Upon opening it I found a sheet of thick white note paper upon which was pasted, in words carefully cut from a newspaper, the following communication:

"Ring the area bell as the clock strikes nine and wait in the shadow of the steps. Be prompt, be sure, be silent. Three and — make —."

I read it over several times, but at first could make nothing of it. The chief, in some instances where a case needed to be carried on with extreme secrecy and caution, had been known to address missives of a similar nature to his juniors, but, to my knowledge, we had no such cases on hand. Besides, I had talked with him for an hour only the evening before, and nothing which implied the necessity for such a letter had been touched upon. I decided, therefore, enforcing my conclusions with a number of evidences, which need not here be recorded, that the affair was entirely outside the office. The last phrase of the letter puzzled me most of all, until my eyes once more wandered in the direction of the house opposite; a light suddenly broke upon me.

"Three and — make —."

The numbers which filled the blank spaces I cannot, for obvious reasons, make public; but I saw that the first two, placed consecutively, would represent the number of the street, and that added, the sum would equal the number itself of the House with Geeen Blinds. Taking it in connection with the demonstration I had witnessed a few days before, and which I now was even more strongly inclined to think had been meant as a signal to myself, this seemed a very probable solution of the letter. In this idea I was not long to be left in doubt. With the paper in hand, I went to the open window and looked across. My eyes having been much weakened by my recent illness, I had acquired the habit of passing my hand before them to protect them from too crude a light; and in the act of doing this, I now stood and waited. It was not for long. A moment later the blind opened as before. The same figure appeared again, again looked up and down the street, and, finally, across, performing the same pantomime with the nervous hands, and was gone.

I returned to my breakfast and disposed of it absently. Here, I reflected, was the nucleus, perhaps, of that affair to which every junior in the profession looks forward with impatience as the pivot upon which his own success or failure may hang. A mystery or an adventure of come sort, I was sure, awaited me in that strange house across the street. It had in it that element of risk or uncertainty, and of possible danger, which rendered it only the more attractive. It had, also, the charm of being my own individual "find." I did not hesitate as to whether the mandate I had received should be obeyed. To be prompt, sure and silent was my immediate determination. The first thing to do, however, was to discover, without seeming to do so, as much about the affair as possible. To accomplish anything of the sort, however, I found extremely difficult. The directory told me nothing of importance about the house, and I could find no real-estate agent who knew anything concerning the place or could tell me more than that the owner was now living abroad, and the place had been recently leased by a lady who was intending to occupy it during the coming winter. I next, after some difficulty, succeeded in tracing the messenger boy who had delivered the note at my door. From him I learned it had been given him by a man in the Hotel B——, with only the instructions to take it to the number and leave it for the occupant of the third-floor front. The man he described as tall, handsome and well-dressed, wearing a closely-cut black imperial and using a single eye-glass. At the Hotel B—— they remembered such a personage being seen in the corridor, but said he had not been a guest of the hotel and had not registered, so they could give me no information concerning him. With this scanty success in finding a clue to what might be awaiting me, I returned to my own house to rest for the remainder of the day, being still easily tired, and thinking to husband my strength for what might be before me. I tried even not to trouble myself with theories as to what use I or my services might presently be put, but endeavored for the time being to make my mind, as much as possible, a blank, that it might be the more ready when activity should be required.

Toward eight o'clock I prepared myself as well as I could for any emergency which might befall, by placing a small revolver in each pocket of my trousers, where they could be quickly available without exciting suspicion, and by taking an innocent-looking but really formidable blackthorn stick in my hand. Thus equipped, I let myself out into the street and walked slowly in the direction of the avenue.

It was just in the edge of the dark and the arc lights were beginning their nightly flicker. A great number of idle strollers were thronging the streets, so that my aimless wanderings back and forth were not likely to attract attention. For reasons of quite ordinary precaution, I wished to approach my projected destination from one of the avenues instead of directly and with visible purpose from my own quarters, for I had no means of being sure that the place was not already marked by other men of my own trade. I kept close account of the time, and my repeater told two minutes before nine when I slipped as unostentatiously as possible into the shadow of the area, and waited. As a neighboring clock began its deep-toned message I put out my hand and pulled the handle of the bell. Crowding back immediately against the steps, I was surprised to feel that the iron gate readily yielded to the slightest pressure of my body against it, and finding no impediment to my progress I pushed it open and stepped inside. Waiting here again fcr a moment for a response to my ring, but hearing no stir in the house, I groped about until my hand touched the knob of the inner door. This, also, yielded to my touch. I pushed it wide open with my stick and it swung back without obstruction until it struck the wall. For a moment, before the inky blackness of the void which now confronted me, I hesitated. Then, fixing my hat firmly upon my head and getting a good grip, with both hands held out in front of me, upon my stick, I began to move cautiously forward.

CHAPTER II.

There was not a glimmer of light in front of me, but, as I advanced into the passageway, I was distinctly conscious that I was not alone there. Weakened as I was by my illness, and at the disadvantage at which a man must always be in a place which is both strange and dark, I found myself for the moment quite ready to turn tail and make good a retreat. I knew well, however, that as great danger, were danger near, would attach itself to such a course as to going forward; so I cursed myself inaudibly for a coward, and, dashing aside the drops of perspiration which had gathered on my face, reached out boldly and gave a resounding rap with my stick upon the nearest wall. At the same moment I detected a soft movement near me, like the swish of a woman's gown. Something gently touched me, and I wheeled rapidly about. My left hand instinctively sought my trousers' pocket. It was empty. I tried the other. That, too! Both my pistols were gone. For the space of three or four minutes, as it seemed to me, I stood still and breathless, not knowing what next might come. And then, suddenly, a burst of strong light struck me full in the face. A door, against which I should have been brought to a standstill in a moment more, opened, and upon the threshold stood the same figure which I had already seen upon two occasions. Blinded for an instant by the sudden illumination, my hand went quickly to protect my eyes. The man who confronted me went through the same performance. He then began to back away from me into the room beyond, motioning me to follow. Once inside, with the door closed behind us, he took in either hand a lamp from one of the tables in the room and guided me up a flight of steep stairs which led from it to the room above. As upon the former occasions when I had seen him, he was without coat or waistcoat, and still wore the cotton night-cap tied closely under his chin. A pair of baggy trousers, worn and shiny, completed his attire. I noted that his hands were discolored with stains of brown and yellow, such as are left by contact with chemicals of certain descriptions. There was a slight, scarcely perceptible limp in his walk, and when he turned toward me I saw that he had recently lost the brow and lashes which properly belonged to his left eye.

No word passed between us, but now, as we reached the top of the stairs, my guide wheeled suddenly about, and, flashing the light full in my face, stood gazing steadily into it. Then he turned and went on again, muttering audibly to himself:

"Three times he has givan the signal," I heard him say. "Yet he should not be trusted. They are growing careless or desperate. They have—"

I could not catch the rest of it. A subdued murmur of other voices reached me from a room beyond. My guide deposited his lamp upon a table near at hand, and, pushing open the door of the room, again motioned me to enter. Once more the extreme brilliancy of the light which flooded it struck my eyes painfully; and again, to shield them, my hand went quickly up. The three people who were in the room languidly mimicked me, and I began to perceive another light. "Three times he has given the signal," my late guide had said. Apparently I had now raised the count to four. It was a handy thing to know, but this knowledge also informed me that, through some misapprehension, I was looked upon by my new acquaintances as a confederate. Should I be unable to keep up the delusion, it occurred to me that my situation might not be an enviable one, and I began to have an uncomfortable longing for my revolvers. The room into which I had entered was, apparently, the large drawing-room of the house. Rich and heavy draperies hung at all the windows, so arranged as to carefully prevent any ray of light from within being visible from the street, and making the air hot and stifling. This was further intensified by the all-pervading odor of Turkish cigarettes. Of the three occupants, two wer men in the full regalia of evening dress the third was a woman whose superb whit shoulders fairly glistened above the folds o black and gold lace which outlined them All wore half masks of black satin and hel cigarettes between lips and fingers.

For a moment they scrutinized me wit insolent coolness, the taller of the two me taking the cigarette from between his lip and emitting a delicate wreath of smok which curled and curled into ever-widen ing, swaying rings. We watched it in silenc until it had all disappeared, and then, com ing forward leisurely, he addressed me:

"You may as well sit down," he said.

I deposited myself upon the nearest chai My guide remained standing near the doo Madame of the White Shoulders tossed asid her cigarette and leaned forward in an att tude of strained attention. The other ma fumbled aimlessly about the mass of paper which littered the piano. My interlocut had stationed himself upon the stuffed ar of a lounging-chair in front of me.

"You have the correspondence with you he said.

I answered simply "No"—waiting my cu

"Then where is it?" he continued.

"It was not given to me finally," I r plied, at random.

"And your instructions?"

"Merely to wait for a chance to tell yo this."

They seemed surprised, and madame mad some rapid remarks to the other in a tong with which I was unfamiliar. Then, mov ing with a long, graceful step, which mad no sound upon the heavy rugs with whic the floor was covered, she came in her tu and confronted me.

"Why did you come armed?" she d manded.

She was standing before me, her magni cent figure drawn up to its full height, a I arose and faced her before answering:

"I thought it only a proper precautio and one which I habitually take."

"Then you should also take care to be le easily disarmed," she proceeded, with so impatience. "How long have you bee waiting for this opportunity to tell us th you have to disappoint us, after all?"

I told her ten days—the length of time had been in the house over the way.

"From whom did you receive the signal she demanded.

For a moment, as her eyes flashed in mine, something impelled me to throw the game I was playing and confess my i postorship, but a second thought nerved n to go on.

"It is better," I replied, "even here, mention no names."

She shrugged her white shoulders slightl

"Your caution is admirable," she sai "See that you continue it. Meanwhile, wi you explain yourself more fully? The me sage announcing your arrival with the le ters we expected you to deliver to-night w received two weeks ago. You have watch your chance to communicate with us we and with commendable caution. But no that you are here you bring us nothin Explain, if you please."

I stammered blindly (for I could not which way matters were tending), that had, at the last moment, been conside unsafe to send the communication for wh they were looking; that certain thi were discovered; that another mess must be waited for. Madame regarded for a moment with no attempt toward c cealing her suspicion, and I saw her e flash darkly through the black mask.

I stood narrowly watching the th people before me, my back toward the d and both hands behind me grasping blackthorn stick, of which I had kep jealous hold. As I saw the glances wh they exchanged, my hands involunta tightened their grasp. At the same mom a touch of cold steel made itself felt aga my wrists and a sharp click broke the mentary stillness of the room. I trie separate my hands and found that t were cuffed. I made no struggle, for I k in other cases, where I had been the op tor and another the victim, that the m who submitted quietly to his fate stood chance of best treatment from his capt I turned just in time to see the man w the stained hands moving back to his pl by the door, and then, without a wo brought my eyes back to meet madam She let a low, deliciously rippling bit laughter escape her lips.

"You take it well," she said. "N Jackson, search him!"

The stained hands made a rapid expl tion of my pockets, but, thanks to the caution I had taken before starting nothing of a nature to excite further picion of my good faith was discove The search, however, seemed scarcely satisfy their fears, for they held a hur and somewhat excited conversation gether, wherein the two men seemed to h an opinion differing from that of mada She finally turned from them and c manded the man she addressed as Jack to release me.

"I have for you a further commission," began, the words falling quickly and ter from her lips, making the slightly for accent with which she spoke charmin perceptible. "To-morrow you will take train which leaves the Grand Central S tion at ten o'clock for P——. In two ho you will arrive there. You will be met a man to whom you will give the us signal. You will find him awaiting with a light wagon and a pair of bl horses. He will take you to a certain house whither further orders will be conveyed to you within the twenty-fours which follow. Should you by any means fail to receive them within that time, you are at liberty to return. As before, be prompt, be sure, and, as you value your life, be silent. Do not think that a mistake on your part will escape detection, or that a blunder will pass unforgiven. I will return to you your pistols. When next you are inclined to suspect a possible danger, take better care of them."

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Her voice ceased, and she stood close before me, her eyes blazing into mine.

"I have seen you somewhere—some time," she added, slowly. "You will be true either to ourselves or to our enemies. For your own sake, let it be the former!"

She took out my pistols from a drawer in the table near which she was standing, and half held them toward me, when suddenly there peeled through the room the long, shrill quivering of an electric bell. Madame drew back—a revolver in each hand. We stood in silence, staring into each other's eyes. She raised her right hand slowly until the weapon covered my face.

"If you have been false," she said, "if you have dared to speak, your own bullet shall repay you."

I bowed a silent answer. The revolver followed the bending of my head, down and up. The bell pealed again, this time in two short, quick rings, with a distinct pause between. One of the men let fall an oath. The other breathed a sigh of relief. Madame lowered her weapon and turned to my late guide.

"Unfasten the door," she said. "It is one of us. Perhaps a messenger from the same source, with the letters at last. There was no one to expect, though, but this stranger. What—"

She changed her speech to the strange tongue she had used previously, for the moment speaking earnestly to her companions. All four stood, listening in silence. Presently the door opened, and Jackson, with his yellow hands, pushed a slender, girl-like figure into the room. The small, gloved hand, which trembled slightly, went twice across her darkly-veiled face. The signal was quickly answered, and the four, Jackson included, collected in a little group about the newcomer, leaving me for the moment forgotten and apart.

"Why are you here?" one of the men began, abruptly.

"Through no wish of my own," the girl replied.

Madame brought one of my pistols carelessly into position, and she shrank back. Again the laughter rippled lightly from madame's lips.

"You are a coward still! Always a coward, and the child of a coward!" she said. "Now, once more, why are you here?"

The girl made an effort to control herself.

"I have a message," she replied.

"Deliver it," madame impatiently demanded.

I saw through her veil, which she had not raised, that she glanced timidly in my direction, before replying.

"It is this," she said. "You are to trust no one who comes to-night, or any night, as a messenger, but bringing no message."

I had thought my danger over, and here it was—just begun! I saw madame turn slowly toward me and as slowly take aim with my own weapon. I saw the three men—Jackson with his yellow hands outstretched—start toward me with fierce oaths upon their lips. I heard the girl who had warned them against me cry out for fear and mercy, and saw her with a frantic effort throw herself against madam's white arm. Then, as the biting snap of the pistol rang through the place, I covered the space which lay between me and the door, with a violent effort wrenched it open, and before madame could get a second aim or the others interfere, had gained the passage and a short relief.

The lamps which Jackson had left upon the table were still burning, so that I could dimly see my way. It seemed to me, as I afterward thought of it, that I cleared the stairs at a single bound, and that my hand touched the knob of the street-door at the same moment that my late companions issued from the room above. The door resisted my efforts to open it, and I saw that it had been barred and bolted. Long before I could undo the fastenings my four assailants would have reached me. I had sense enough to know they would not stop at murder were there danger of my escaping with any part of their secret. I could do nothing, still weak as I was and unarmed, against so many. Even my stick had been dropped in flight. An instant still I wavered, and then the remembrance of a door I had noticed at the other end of the passage, when Jackson's first appearance with the lamps had made surrounding objects visible, returned to me. Turning back, I groped for it blindly, for they had extinguished in their haste one of the lights above, and the other gave but a feeble flicker. The men were rushing headlong down the stairs, and madam's voice rang out distinctly:

"No struggle!" she cried. "Let there be no noise. Stun him and bind him. The police will be upon us."

My fingers touched the door. It was fastened like the other. Frantically I threw myself against it. It yielded slightly. Once more, with all the strength that comes at the need of a desperate man, I put my shoulder to it. The wood cracked—splintered—gave way. A breath of soft night air struck my face. A step more and, looking up, I saw that the stars were shining.

CHAPTER III.

I found that I had gained the yard, or small court, which properly belongs to every New York house. Enclosed as it was on three sides with its high, smooth palings, and on the fourth by the house from which I had but just escaped, it seemed at first glance as neat a trap as a man could well wish himself well out of. I stopped for a moment to listen for any sign from my pursuers, but all lay still and dark behind me. They would, I thought, scarcely venture from a house which was supposed to be unoccupied, into a place where so many windows could look down upon them. I remembered that the house stood not many numbers from the street corner, and that the avenue upon that side had no buildings to face it. The rows of "yards" lay enclosed only by their white palings. An escape, therefore, meant no more, after all, than the scaling of some ten or a dozen of these fencings, and my assailants naturally would consider that I could easily accomplish this, not knowing how my strength was already wasted. I crouched, meanwhile, to rest in the deep shadow cast by the house, being invisible from any of the windows, unless a light were held. This I knew they would not dare to do any more than they would engage in a struggle to bring me forcibly back, since by so doing they must inevitably attract notice to themselves.

I do not know how long I lay crouching there. The summer air that night had an evil chill in it which crept gradually into my bones. A kind of apathy came over me which made me oblivious to the surrounding strangeness. For the moment the twinkling lights in the houses about, the soft sounds of children's voices and the chattering tongues of the servants, borne above the dull roar of the streets, had little meaning for me. The danger I had passed through was forgotten; to the danger I was still in I was oblivious.

I was awakened to it by the sound of a window being slowly and carefully raised somewhere above my head. Shifting slightly my position, so that I could look up and still remain unseen, I saw Jackson peering cautiously down into the shadow. He drew in his head, and again looked out, apparently but half satisfied with the poor opportunity his position afforded him. Some one inside whispered an inaudible direction to him, and the window was lowered. No doubt he was preparing to come down. I got to my feet, therefore, and felt my way along the wall until my hand came in contact with the paling. It was covered, on the corner nearest the avenue, with a straggling but long-limbed creeper of some sort, which clung partly to the brick wall of the house itself and partly to the wood. It was but a poor support, but by grasping with my hands the top of it, I was about to let myself down into the next yard, when a sound of voices whispering together somewhere near arrested my attention. A little above me was the last of the row of three windows in the second story of the House with Green Blinds. By getting my feet upon the top of the fence and standing upright, I could see that the glass was lowered slightly from the top. The blinds inside were closed, so that the room beyond was invisible. I had not a moment to decide upon which course I should pursue, for below me I heard Jackson coming along the passage to make his exploration of the yard. Again clinging lightly to the vine, I stretched out my foot until it touched the stone coping of the window. A light push of the other against the paling, a little more dependence upon the creeping plant, which happily had fastened itself strongly against the wall, and I was standing upright in the shallow recess of the window. As Jackson came out of the shadow in which I had just been lying, I could see him plainly. He was followed by the taller of the other two men, and they made the round of the yard together, coming even to stand close under my feet and looking up at the vine. Satisfied, apparently, that I had made my escape at this point, they then returned to the house.

I heard them set up the broken door against its hinges and go back along the passage. The drawing-room in which I had so lately been evidently connected with the room from which my window opened, for by putting my ear close to the aperture I heard the two men enter and announce the surety of my escape. They went on then to talk rapidly in the language they had used together, madam's voice ever rising distinctly and calmly above the excited tones of the men. Finally, however, she seemed to take things into her own hands, for her voice alone became audible, the sentences dropping crisply from her lips, as when she had given me her commands. All that I could gather of their conversation, however, were the words "Tuxedo," followed by the name of the man who keeps a great establishment there. Then, after a few more apparently decisive directions, the party seemed preparing to separate. I could hear nothing more of the girl who had saved my life. Her voice had not joined in the colloquy, and I decided that she had not been present while it was in progress, and that probably she had left the house as quietly as she had come. There seemed nothing further to be gained by remaining in my present position. I let myself back, therefore, to my former place upon the top of the paling, and from there laboriously made my way, with what aid I could find, from one yard to another, until once more I found myself upon the street. Weary as I was, I could not yet allow myself the luxury of rest. As I walked rapidly along toward the goal to which I was bound, I forced myself to think rapidly over my adventure and some circumstances with which it was connected. The chief of them was my familiarity with madam's wonderful voice. A peculiarity in the human voice was something I had trained myself never to forget. I had no difficulty in recalling the time and place in which a voice singularly like hers, but proceeding apparently from a very different source, had first attracted my attention.

Some eighteen months before I had been in England, where I had been so fortunate as to gain the friendship and esteem of a man whose pleasure it was, with the genius which had been given him and the great skill which he had acquired, to unravel the mysteries and to discover the dangers which too often surround our fellow-men and women. At the time of my visit he had been engaged in unearthing an atrocious plot which had threatened the existing Government. The scheme had developed almost to the point of the perpetration of a great crime, when my friend's foresight succeeded in capturing and bringing to the bar of justice the ringleaders themselves. With the usual caution and conservativeness of the English nation, the whole affair had been handled with extreme secrecy and fear of public knowledge. Being kept almost entirely out of the newspapers, few people knew anything of it and the details of the case went little farther than the court. Through the interest of my friend, by whose sagacity the plot had been discovered, I was privileged to witness the trial. One of the prisoners had strangely interested me. He was singularly prepossessing in appearance; a curling mass of dark hair, worn rather long; eyes that burned like veritable fire; the contour of his face lengthened by the addition of a well-groomed beard, cut closely in the French fashion; his hands and feet small and finely cared for; his figure slender. In fact, the very opposite in personality and tradition to the usually accepted anarchistic idea. Yet devotion to the cause he had adopted seemed the very breath he drew. His voice, high in quality of tone for a man as was hers low for a woman, was, as I recalled it, very similar to that in which Madame of the White Shoulders had but lately addressed me. I distinctly remembered the particulars of the trial and its strange outcome. The boy—he seemed scarcely more—had been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor, with other members of the gang. They were taken at once to Portsmouth. Upon the third morning after their incarceration, his cell, together with those of one or two of the others, was found empty. The bars had been neither filed nor broken, but simply unlocked. Suspicion attached itself to one of the jailers, who, in turn, was arrested, tried for conniving at the escape of the several prisoners, found guilty upon strong circumstantial evidence (although stoutly protesting his innocence), and condemned to a long term of imprisonment. The only trace of the convicts which could be found were the several suits of prison stripes which they had exchanged in a small clothier's shop in Portsmouth during the night for more modish costumes.

There was but one link connecting this affair with the one in which I was now implicated—a human voice; but yet, to me, from the study I had given the subject, it was no slight connection. I had seen enough to know that a plot of some grave import was hatching in the House with Green Blinds, and that my own appearance upon and disappearance from the scene would by no means retard matters. Whatever the nature of it might be (and I had my own opinion as to this) I had seen and heard enough to know that they could scarcely draw back now.

There was no time to lose, therefore. My goal was the shop of a man well-known to our profession—a costumer and secret dealer in professional disguises. In half an hour I issued from it as well set up a clergyman as one could wish to see. My next move was to trace the girl who had spoiled madam's aim, and in doing so had undoubtedly saved my life. I had noticed, as she stood under the brilliant glare of light in the drawing-room of the House with Green Blinds, that her hat and veil and gown were covered with shining particles of black dust—a kind which collects rarely except during a railway journey. She had entered the room hurried and breathless, as though she had been walking rapidly. Had she come in from any station other than the Grand Central, which was but a few blocks away, it seemed to me, from her evident desire for haste, that she would scarcely have taken time for walking. I possessed myself, working upon these suppositions, of a time-table, and found that an accommodation train which had P—— (whither madam had commanded me to go the next day) for one of its stations, had arrived but a few minutes before the time of the girl's appearance at the House with Green Blinds. No other for the same station was scheduled to depart within six hours. It was now nearly twelve o'clock, and there remained but one thing to do before allowing myself a few hours of much-needed rest. This was to have an interview with my chief and explain to him the details of an affair which it had grown out of my power to control unaided. I found him just leaving his club, and explained the thing to him carefully, together with my own plans and ideas. He was kind enough to commend them and to allow me to go on as I had intended, leaving practically the entire management in my hands, but giving me the benefit of his advice and placing whatever assistance I desired at my disposal. I sent Ray, of the department, therefore, together with another young fellow from our own office, to my rooms to watch whatever might go on in the opposite house and to dog any one who might issue from it, though the latter seemed to me a needless precaution.

Before six o'clock, having in the meantime been refreshed by a few hours' sleep at the Hotel B——, I was strolling, without apparently other aim than that of waiting for my train, up and down through the waiting-room of the Grand Central station. It was not long before my expectation was fulfilled. The girl entered the waiting-room and went immediately to the ticket-office, where she purchased a ticket to P——. What set me back, however, was the appearance of the person who followed close behind her. I could not have sworn to his identity, but the resemblance was a marked one. The hair, escaping from under his soft hat in wavy richness, the well-groomed appearance, the small hands and feet, were all in evidence. The chief difference lay in the fact that now his beard was worn rather long and of a jet-black color, whereas the man whom I had seen tried and convicted of a grave charge in Her Majesty's criminal court some eighteen months before had worn a light-brown imperial. This, of course, was a matter easily changed by one who wished to disguise himself; and after I had caught a glimpse of his eyes, as they flashed for an instant brilliantly into mine, the resemblance, even the very identity of the man with the one I had seen, was borne more forcefully upon me. And yet I had seen those eyes, or others like them, more lately. Through the holes of the satin mask, they (or was it but a resemblance?) had questioned me not yet twelve hours before, and the same strange attraction in them held me now as then.

He did not seem to be in company with the girl for whom I had waited (for she took no notice of him at all, and, after buying her ticket, stood quietly waiting for the gate to open), but, as well as I could make out, was there as a spy upon her movements and on the lookout for some one else. He had stationed himself near her in a position where everyone who went through the gate must pass under the searching of his eye. I had noticed, however, that he had purchased no ticket, and I perceived that my only chance of an interview with the girl would be in following her on board the train. Had he been sent by the people from the House with Green Blinds to see, without her knowledge, that no one approached her, and that she was safely out of town without a chance of betraying them (for that they had mistrusted her was evident enough)? He would scarcely allow a person against whom he had the slightest suspicion to follow her through the gate. I had no knowledge of his being acquainted with my own appearance, and yet, even while he might not have been present the night before at our interview, there had been plenty of time for any member of the organization to become familiar with my face while they were watching me in my rooms and before the signal had been given to me by Jackson. My only hope, therefore, was that my disguise would pass muster. As it happened, chance favored me in more ways than one. As I was following the other passengers through the door which led to the train I passed very close to the man as he stood carelessly watching. The woman in front of me—an old woman, laden with a huge and heavy basket—dropped a small pocket-book. He stooped and picked it up, returning it to her courteously, and in so doing I saw that his beard was false. The next moment I was through the gate unchallenged, and had assured myself that he remained behind.

CHAPTER IV.

I followed the girl into the car, and seated myself behind and near her. She had sunk into the corner of the seat in an attitude of utter weariness and discouragement. I owed her my life, no doubt, and I felt for her at the moment, besides gratitude, a sincere pity. Yet I was on the point of asking her to risk still more than she had already done. There was no other way. I looked around at our fellow-passengers—the old woman with her

Keep on Coughing

if you want to. If you want to cure that cough get ***Ayer's Cherry Pectoral.*** *It cures coughs and colds.*

basket, a boy who was audibly sleeping, and a young man who was seated in the front of the car, absorbed in a yellow-covered novel. There was not one whom I could suspect of watching us. I went, therefore, without further hesitation, to take the place in front of her, and, with as much nonchalance as I could command, asked her if she could tell me the name of the man who had followed her into the station.

For a moment she seemed startled, and shrank still farther back, but a glance at my cloth seemed to reassure her.

"I saw no one," she replied. "I came quite alone."

It never occurred to me to doubt her. I knew, whatever the character of those with whom she had been associated, that she, at least, was innocent—an unwilling tool in their hands. I told her, therefore, in as few words as possible, who I was, and tried first of all to thank her for what she had done for me, while she was kind enough to express pleasure in learning of my escape. I then went on to beg of her that, if she were in trouble, as I felt that she was, to let me help her. I explained without reserve my connection with the House with Green Blinds, and all I hoped to accomplish with the knowledge I had concerning it. She listened quietly while I told her, and I saw a look of wistfulness, of longing, of resolve, grow in her great dark eyes. Finally it came.

"I will tell you what I know," she said; and there were tears in her voice, though her eyes were dry. "There is no other course. I had no hope of doing anything, but now you may be able to do what I cannot." And she told me the following:

Her name was Cutting, and with her father, a widower, she lived at P——. The winter before they had spent in Washington, where, at a reception given at the White House, her father first had met Madame of the White Shoulders—as I still must call her, This woman was a stranger in the cosmopolitan city, a magnificently handsome woman, part French, part Russian, and was said to be a sister of one of the members of the Russian legation. Her beauty had created a sensation; Miss Cutting's father had fallen under its spell. Madame seemed to exercise a strange influence over him. He became strange, moody, irritable. He was often absent upon sudden and unexplained journeys, from which he returned dejected and, apparently, frightened and desperate. The cause Miss Cutting herself had never known until her own connection with the affair began, but a few weeks ago. At that time new aid had been needed by the gang of which she had since become cognizant, and she, as one who would not dare to betray her own father, had been chosen. Since then she had been constantly employed as a messenger between the members of the organization whenever a messenger had been needed.

For some weeks she had known that a plot of magnitude had been silently hatching, but in what direction she could only conjecture. Her father had been silent and careworn when at home, which was rarely. She herself had been dispatched hither and yon, to deliver such messages as I had heard, at any time of day or night. She had not dared to rebel, for her father's sake. From the messages, which were necessarily confided to her, she had learned that the people with whom her father had become entangled belonged to a large society, which had members and organizations in many countries. From telegrams and cables which she had been required to send (written in cipher, of which she had been able to acquire some knowledge), she had learned that the plot which was forming in this country was duplicated in many European ones, and that the consummation was near she feared from many signs which the designers had not been able to keep from her knowledge. Madame of the White Shoulders was here the leading spirit. Her brother, of the Russian legation (in the description of whom I recognized both the man who had given the note to the messenger boy and he who had assisted Jackson in his search for me about the yard), was her chief assistant. The third man, she believed, was a Russian who had escaped to this country after implication in a desperate attempt to assassinate the Czar, discovered, happily, in time. Jackson was a mere tool, whose skill in the manufacture of delicate explosives rendered him of incalculable value to the others. Of the man who had traced her to the station she had no knowledge, having never seen any one who answered to his description.

Of my own connection with the affair she was able to give me some knowledge. Two weeks before, after many desperate attempts, madame's brother had succeeded in abstracting some state papers of great value to his associates in Washington. They had made every effort to get them to New York undiscovered. He, however, had been obliged to deliver them at once to a trusted messenger, since it was unsafe to have them remaining in his own hands. The messenger had been no other than Miss Cutting's father, who had been peremptorily summoned to Washington to answer the needs of his confrères. The papers had been immediately missed, but, thanks to his extreme cunning, the actual thief had been able to escape detection or even suspicion. The latter, however, had fastened itself, through a succession of strange circumstances, upon Cutting himself, and it had immediately become necessary to find a new messenger to bring them to madame in New York, in whose hands they must be placed. In this predicament they had been obliged to fix upon a young man who had lately become entangled with a part of the society in England, and who had just made his escape to America. He was personally unknown to the principals here, but they had no other course than to direct Cutting, by wire, to trust him. With the extremest caution, therefore, the papers were confided to his care, and a communication to that effect immediately forwarded to madame and her confederates. The young fellow was directed to proceed with the utmost secrecy, it being feared that the Washington detectives had already found the scent. Cutting was being watched closely, and had much difficulty in performing his part in the proceeding. The messenger was to communicate with Jackson (who had been stationed in the House with Green Blinds, which madame had rented for like needs some weeks before), in the way which recommended itself to him when the opportunity occurred.

As he was personally unknown, the only way in which he could be recognized was by giving an unobtrusive signal a number of times. When this was done he was to be admitted to the house. About the time he was expected a young man was seen to take up his abode in the opposite house. He never left it, but sat conspicuously at the window, gazing intently at the House with Green Blinds. He had given the signal (which was the rapid passage of the right hand three times across the eyes) clumsily and openly three times. They had entertained grave suspicions as to his identity, but there was nothing to do but trust him. The time for action was rapidly nearing, and they were desirous of getting possession of the papers, if possible, before this arrived. The signal was finally returned, therefore, and an appointment made by letter. This, of course, was the communication I had received the morning before. All this Miss Cutting had learned from her father, who had returned suddenly towards seven o'clock in the afternoon. He had been much depressed and agitated. The letters had been traced, and the young fellow to whom they had been intrusted was being closely shadowed by the police. There was fear that the detectives were also on the track of madame's brother, and it was necessary to send them a warning. This had been intrusted to herself, with what success has already been told.

She informed me that, after my escape into the yard (whither, as I had conjectured, they had not at first dared to follow, for fear of attracting the attention of the surrounding houses) a hurried consultation had been held. The men had thought that, were I a detective sent to spy upon them, I would doubtless decide that my next best chance of learning their intentions would be to follow madame's directions and go the next day to P——, where I would expect further developments. Miss Cutting told me (and I had expected as much myself) that, from what she could gather, this had been merely a scheme of madame's to get me out of the way for twenty-four hours, no matter whether I were a spy or untried confederate. Madame herself, however, had disagreed with her companions. She had declared that an effort must be made to stop me, and that every train to P—— must be watched. Miss Cutting herself, whom they had never wholly trusted, and for whom, on account of her interference in my behalf, they had no greater love, they tried to intimidate further with threats. It was necessary, however, that both her father and herself, who might prove formidable witnesses against them, should things go wrong, be gotten out of the way. For this reason she could not be kept a temporary prisoner, as they had at first suggested. Her father had made all arrangements for a flight, in which she was to accompany him, and she was, therefore, taken for the remainder of the night to the hotel at which madame was staying. She was an important witness for my own side also, but she had saved my life. What else could I do but further her own escape? I promised to do whatever in me lay to prevent the danger which threatened our country and to aid her to my utmost ability both in shielding her father and in covering their escape. As she bade me good-bye when I left the train at the last station before P——, the tears had finally welled to her eyes. I was glad to think that partially, at any rate, they might be tears of relief.

I took the next train back to town, eagerly looking at every station for the first edition of the morning papers. When finally they arrived and I opened the one I had selected, I discovered both the headlines I had hoped to find. The first was as satisfactory as the second seemed to me conclusive. It stated that a young man had been captured in Brooklyn, while in the very act of destroying the valuable papers which had been stolen two weeks before from the State Department in Washington. A few had been recaptured. They were the letters which had passed between the Russian Ambassador and our Secretary of State, regarding the return to the Russian Government of some suspected persons now in this country. A quantity of dispatches from the said Government to their Ambassador at Washington were also among the documents. The young man in whose possession they were found had been brought to New York, and was now awaiting examination. From what I could make of this article he had apparently given no information which implicated any of the people connected with the House with Green Blinds, and I doubted whether any such information was in his possession. It was scarcely probable that more than the barest directions had been intrusted to him.

The second headline read something as follows: "Wealth, Wit and Beauty to do Honor to Our Executives. Mr. ——'s Famous Ball-Room Literally Lined with Roses. Tuxedo on the *qui vive.* A Brilliant Affair To-night."

Upon these grounds, then, I was basing my case.

While I stood, listening, upon the window ledge the night before, madame had mentioned both Tuxedo and the name of the man at whose house the ball was to be given. It was to be given in honor of a great statesman and his wife. Members of the various foreign legations were to attend. During the day I had seen, in some mysterious connection with madame and her associates, the young man who had been tried and convicted of a crime which had held in England a position very similar to the way things here, as I dissected them, were tending. Madame's voice and his were strangely alike. It had been considered—no matter how I was supposed to be related to the affair—expedient to get me out of the way for twenty-four hours, and to do so without exciting my suspicion. After that I might return. Miss Cutting and her father had been ordered to escape from the country within the same time, as it was desirable that they, after that time, should not be within reach of the police. Last of all, the man Jackson, a tool in the hands of the others, had been experimenting very recently—as shown by his absent eyebrow—in chemicals of an explosive nature. And the third man at the House of the Green Blinds, who had not spoken in my hearing, was wanted (together, for all I knew to the contrary, with the others), in his own country to pay the penalty of an attempt made upon the life of his sovereign.

CHAPTER V.

It was ten o'clock when once more I entered the office of my chief. I found him awaiting me there. Ray had just come from my rooms with news of importance from the House with Green Blinds. A short time before, the people in the street and the houses near had been startled by the noise of a heavy explosion. It had come, as well as they could make out, from the house he had been watching. The police had been summoned and an effort made to gain admission to the place. No reply had been obtained to the ringing of the bell, and they were now preparing to force an entrance. The chief had waited merely to give me the information, and we at once set out together. There was the inevitable crowd of people before the house, through which we forced our way. The door had been broken open and a policeman guarded the entrance on either side. As we went in, a noisome odor of chemicals filled the air. We made our way to the drawing-room, where I had been the night before. Here, upon the table, I discovered one of my revolvers, and underneath it a piece of paper, on which was scrawled the word "Beware!"

From here Ray, who had preceded us, led the way upstairs again to a small skylight room in the rear of the house. We discovered there shelves filled with bottles, retorts, pestles and mortars, and books piled anywhere about. On the floor, his head torn and burned beyond recognition, lay Jackson. I knew him by his yellow hands and peculiar dress, and saw that his own deviltry had been his undoing. We went carefully over the room. It contained all descriptions of materials for compounding explosives. Half finished infernal machines, wheels and springs scattered everywhere, and various memoranda which were of value in their way. Near what remained of the man we discovered on the floor a dark stain, which at first sight I thought to be blood. A closer examination, however, revealed the fact that it was either claret or some other deep red wine. In one of the yellow hands was gripped a small vial about which a scrap of paper was wrapped. Written in English upon it were the following words: "In two gills of claret, one. In champagne, two. For action in the first case, five minutes. In the second, seven."

The vial contained three or four small white pellets. We determined to try an experiment. A man was sent for a bottle of Piper-Heidseck. Of this he poured a small quantity into an empty bottle, and dropping in one of the white pellets, placed the whole upon the window ledge. Closing the sash, I stood, watch in hand, and waited. Whether simply poison or some stronger and stranger thing, I did not stop to wonder; but as the number of minutes recommended in the note crawled slowly by an uneasy sensation came over me, which made me draw back and motion the others to do the same. The next moment the stillness was broken by a dull report and the falling of shattered glass. We started forward. The glass lay broken in small bits. A portion of the stone coping had been torn away. The bottle was nowhere visible.

I knew little of chemistry. Whether the man Jackson had made a great discovery in producing a material upon which the action of certain kinds of liquids was necessary to bring about a concussion, by absorbing with the various degrees of strength contained in the fluid the hard outer coating of his preparation, and bringing the delicate interior into contact with some foreign substance, or whether such methods are generally known and practiced by the profession, I cannot tell. I only thought at the time that the last link in the chain of proceedings was now without doubt in my hand.

At nine o'clock that night Ray, another man and myself were stationed in the hall of Mr. ——'s great house at Tuxedo. We had been substituted for three detectives who were to have been sent down in the usual way. I had placed Ray at the entrance to the ball-room, myself near the vestibule of the house; the other man hovered anywhere about. We had not long to wait. The guests of the evening were early to arrive—the great man short-breathed, ponderous but genial; his young wife handsome and gracious. Behind them came a small sprinkling of more or less famous politicians, members of the foreign legation, and handsome young *attachés* in the full uniform of their countries. Among these last were two men who at once attracted my attention; the first, by a slight peculiarity in his figure, his quick, nervous movements, the glances full of suspicion and of watchfulness which he constantly threw about—all these signs identified him strongly with the man who had kept silence the night before at the House with Green Blinds. The other was as easily discovered. The tall, well-set-up figure, ornamented by the showy uniform which he now wore, the firm lips curving into a smile that was almost insolent; the large, well-shaped head; the delicate aroma of Turkish cigarettes that floated with him—more, he lighted one as he reached the smoking-room, into which I could see from my station, and sent ring after ring of smoke curling upward. Once before I had seen him do it, but never another man so prettily.

I sent Ray to watch the two closely, and returned to my post. Again I had not long to wait. I had turned to reply to some trivial question which had been addressed to me, when the voice for which I had been waiting floated clearly toward me—a low, delicious laugh. I looked eagerly about. In the smoking-room, talking gayly to a small group of its occupants, was the hero of the English trial—the escaped convict of Portsmouth prison—the boy who had followed Miss Cutting. But I saw no one anywhere about to resemble Madame of the White Shoulders. From where I stood I watched this man until he turned to go, and then drew nearer. As he passed Ray's tall Russian, I heard him say, lightly: "*Tout va bien*," and then he lost himself in the crowd. I saw him go in and out among the throng, looking unostentatiously but carefully about him, and managed for a time to keep in his wake. Then I lost him entirely. For an hour I searched hither and thither, cursing my own stupidity, but without avail. I was growing desperate, fearing that, after all, I should be too late, when again that voice came to my straining ears. It was in the supper-room, where the jingling glasses were playing a graceful accompaniment. I stumbled hastily forward. This time I was not disappointed. I could not but recognize her, though I had never seen her face uncovered before. Perfect it outline as a statue by St. Gaudens, faultless in coloring, and lighted by those glorious eyes which had flashed upon me through the mask—eyes I had seen matched but once, and then by those of the boy I had just so clumsily lost sight of. Her superb, squarely-molded shoulders gleamed richly in the well-arranged lights. For the merest instant her eyes rested upon mine, and their pupils widened. I feared that she had penetrated my disguise. Then she turned again to her companion—none other than the illustrious guest in the interest of whose safety I was working. I was very near them. Looking about, I saw both the men who had been in the House with the Green Blinds, hovering near the doorway. Behind them towered Ray's well-set head. I signaled him to close in. His orders were to arrest them as quietly as they would permit it to be done, and to await, in the carriage which had been provided, my arrival with madame.

She was standing, with her companion, near one of the tables, and I saw him pour a glass of champagne and hand it to her. He watched her, smilingly, as she daintily put it to her lips, and then turned to find one for himself. As he did so I saw madame's hand go steadily into the bosom of her gown, and, taking out a small silver vinaigrette, hold it carelessly for an instant over her glass.

The great man turned to her again and lightly touched her glass with his own.

"May fortune bring you everything which has not already escaped her," he said, gallantly.

"To a health like that, monsieur," replied her marvelous voice, "it is a custom to

THE ONLY
always ready-to-use Stove Paste:—
Enameline
The only paste that never dries out. A thousand times better than powders or liquids. The brightest and easiest stove-polish made. Get the genuine. All dealers.

change glasses, that each may drink the good fortune of the other."

"A very pretty custom," he said, with a heavy laugh. "Let us follow it."

The glasses changed hands. If he should swallow that deadly thing— Good heavens! I threw myself forward, falling heavily against him. Half the wine went trickling down his coat, and he turned about with a savage imprecation. I seized the glass and poured what remained through my fingers until they touched the hard little pellets it contained. Knowing that they had not been there long enough to soften, and that there was no danger from them, I put them in my pocket, and, with what *sang-froid* I could muster, turned to madame and offered her my arm.

"Madame," I stammered, "is forgetful and is mistaken. In her country no way of treating a toast is so unlucky."

The great man looked dazed, but I saw his anger growing. A strange light had come into madame's eye, and I heard her murmur an apology to him.

"For a few minutes—pardon me—an old friend whom I have not seen—since—last night."

She allowed her hand to rest lightly upon my arm.

"For a moment," she said, "come in here," and led me toward the conservatory. I thought no better place could be found for the quiet performance of my duty, for I wished to avoid a scene. A maid could be dispatched for her wraps, and for my own as well, and I could conduct her, as secretly as she would allow, to the carriage which was awaiting her.

She sank upon a cushioned window seat and motioned me to a chair which stood facing it. A strange desire to humor her took possession of me. For a moment she let her eyes rest quietly upon my own.

"Your disguise becomes you," she said, critically.

"And yours," I replied, "becomes you very ill."

Her lips kept their seriousness of outline and her eyes remained fixed on mine. There was a short interval of silence, and then she rose to her feet, standing over me. I started to follow her example, but she motioned me back, and something impelled me to obey. I saw that she had unfastened a splendid tiara of diamonds and sapphires from her hair and was turning it over and over in her hands, where the light from above incessantly toyed with it. The glitter of the thing fascinated me; my eyes followed every movement. I tried to turn away and could not. A drowsy sensation came over me, the soft tones of her voice droned in my ears, sounding far away and sweet and sweeter still.

And then came a dull, monotonous rattle. A newspaper rustled at my elbow. A man's voice—Ray's—was speaking. My eyes were opened (I could not remember closing them) and I was gazing about stupidly. The surroundings were familiar enough. An ordinary passenger coach, journeying swiftly along through the sweet air of a summer morning. A lot of strange people about; Ray in the place beside me, reading his paper.

"If there was such a plot afoot here," he was saying, "it seems to have slipped up without any aid of ours. It is a pretty bad business, though, anyway."

I asked him what, and he looked at me curiously.

"What is the matter with you? You've been queer ever since last night," he returned peevishly, and pointed to a huge headline in his paper. I looked, and read these words: "The Assassination of President Sadi-Carnot!"

For a moment my head reeled and the words danced unmeaningly before my eyes, and then a mist seemed to unfold itself from my brain, and remembrance of the affair I had just been through with came back to me. I unbuttoned my coat, and saw that I was still in evening dress.

I had no little difficulty in persuading Ray to tell me what had occurred, and in convincing him that I had no recollection of it. Finally, however, he told me this:

As he had been directed, he waited for his cue from me before arresting the two men who were in his charge, and he had seen what took place between the illustrious guest, Madame of the White Shoulders and myself. When she accepted my arm, she had turned for an instant to nod and smile at the Russian *attaché*, who was also watching closely. Upon Ray's quiet demand for a surrender, which had immediately followed, this man had followed him to the carriage without a word. The other came as quietly. They had then waited there some five minutes when I appeared, with madame leaning upon my arm. She had expressed great surprise at finding the two men there and under arrest, and had demanded an explanation from me. I had offered her the most abject apologies, and had ordered Ray to at once release his prisoners. I had assured him that the affair, from beginning to end, was a gigantic mistake; that the track we had followed was entirely a wrong one, that we had offered untold insult to three innocent people. He had no course but to credit my word. I had then proceeded to assist madame with great care into her carriage, and she had driven rapidly away, the men following in another coupé. We hastened afterwards, Ray, the man who had come down with us and myself, to the station, where I had purchased, with no further explanations to my companions, three tickets to Boston, which place we were now nearing. The third man had made himself comfortable in the smoking car, as there was no sleeper attached to the train, while Ray had sat all night beside me. During this time I had sat with wide-open eyes, staring straight before me, apparently lost in thought, and until now he had not ventured to disturb me.

And so the beginning of my first case came to its end.

Letters a fortnight later from my friend, the London detective, told me that attempts upon the lives of men in certain other European cities had been made at the same time, but, with the exception of that in which the French President fell, all had been discovered and met in time.

I resigned my position at the office, and have since been devoting most of my time to trying, upon my own responsibility, to get trace of Madame of the White Shoulders. In this quest, so far unsuccessful, for the last two weeks, I have enjoyed the assistance, given with sympathetic zeal, of the girl who saved my life from her, and who no longer bears the name of "Cutting."

Should I succeed in finding madame, I hope to force her to solve two problems; the first, whether she and the young man who wore a false beard and spoke with her voice were identical—the one with the other. And if so, whether she had exercised the same influence which had so swayed my mind to her will upon the jailer of the Portsmouth prison, and by so doing had effected the escape of herself and her companions upon a previous occasion.

THE END.

◆

THE HARTFORD INSURANCE COMPANY.

The 86th Annual Exhibit of this Company, the oldest Insurance Company in Hartford, Connecticut, appears on the last page of this issue of the *Ledger*. Under the careful and conservative personal management of Mr. George L. Chase, its President for nearly a third of a century, it has achieved a magnificent success, and to-day, as for years past, stands as the best type of a Fire Insurance Company. It has always dealt justly by its policy holders, and has their entire confidence.

Its total assets are over $9,000,000, its surplus to policy holders over $4,000,000, and its gross income for 1895 was over $7,000,000.

This Company has Agencies in all prominent Cities and Towns in the United States and Canada.

◆

A SNAKE REGION.

The great Northwest is full of surprises. A tourist recently came across a place in Klamath County, Oregon, where the principal product seems to be snakes. He was a camera fiend and took some snapshots that substantiate what might otherwise be a rather questionable story. According to the picture the snakes are piled up like windrows of grass in a meadow.

The traveller says that while the snakes are harmless, they are not particularly inviting in large quantities.

◆

YOU NEED IT.

A Desk Calendar is a necessity—most convenient kind of storehouse for memoranda. The Columbia Desk Calendar is brightest and handsomest of all—full of dainty pen sketches and entertaining thoughts on outdoor exercise and sport. Occasionally reminds you of the superb quality of Columbia Bicycles and of your need of one. You won't object to that, of course. The Calendar will be mailed for five 2-cent stamps.

Address Calendar Department, Pope Manufacturing Co., Hartford, Conn. —*a.*

◆

A BEAUTIFUL CASTLE CALENDAR

Will be sent free to every reader of the *Ledger* by the Shaw Stocking Co., Lowell, Mass. All that is necessary is to send them a letter or postal card asking for it, and mentioning the *Ledger*.

The Castle Calendar is one of the handsomest calendars issued, and will be a source of pleasure for the entire year. Send at once before the supply is exhausted. —*a.*

◆

WATERBURY WATCHES.

There is one very essential feature in connection with these watches that the public may not fully appreciate, and that is that it is *the only company in the world that make and sell a watch complete*, thereby enabling them to guarantee every part of the watch, the case as well as time-keeping qualities of the movement. All other watch companies in the United States manufacture movements only. These are sold to jobbing houses and others, and by them are cased according to their needs and requirements. The unreliability of many of the so-called gold cases has led to a great deal of trouble and dissatisfaction from purchasers, and inasmuch as they are sold in such an indiscriminate way, no guarantees being given that can be relied on, the public are the sufferers.

This one feature in the make-up of The Waterbury Watch Company, that enables them to guarantee every part of their work, is something that should be well considered by the purchasing public. Send at once for Birthday Catalogue No. 30, which is mailed free. —*a.*

A Comfortable Home
A Cosy Fireside
A Book=Table
A Charming Woman!

What is on the Book=Table?
Of course, The New York Ledger.
There should also be a magazine.

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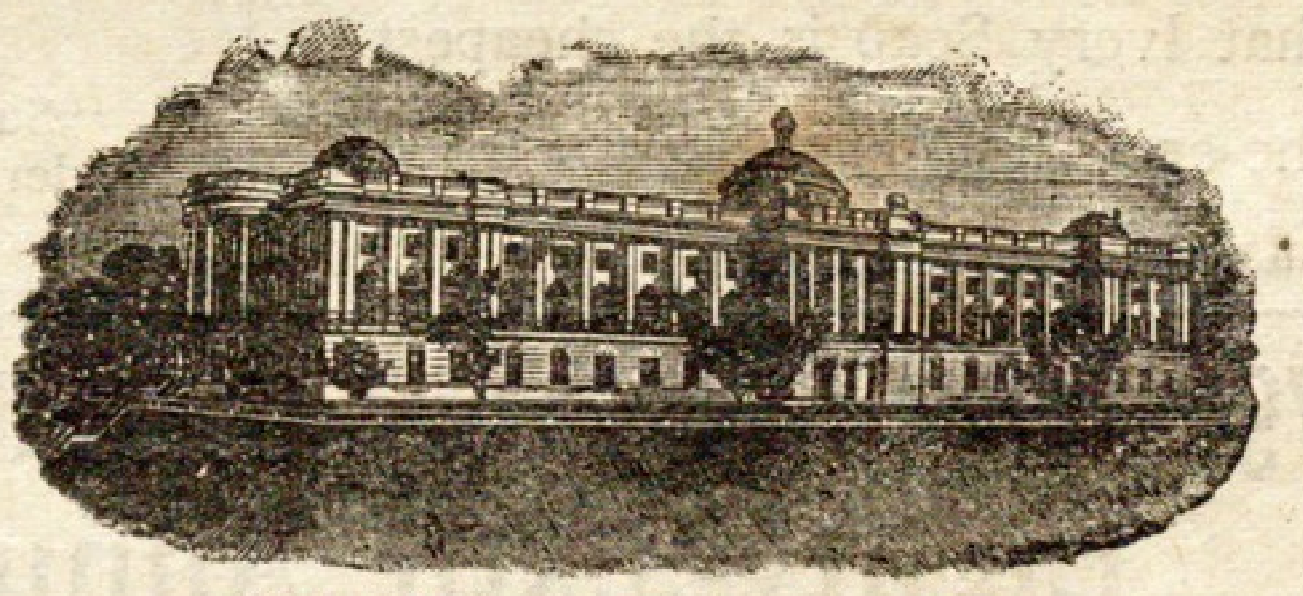
For three months
For 25 cents only.

You will follow that trial up with a dollar for the next year, that is certain; so we can afford the trouble of putting you on for three months in order to convince you, although we would much rather receive your dollar for a whole year.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As we have before said, The Cosmopolitan is to-day the most widely read magazine in the world. Why? Because among its contributors are the ablest thinkers, writers, and artists of both continents. Its wide circulation among the BEST CLASS OF READERS gives it a prestige among advertisers never before equaled by any magazine. For instance, its December issue contains from $4000.00 to $8000.00 more net cash advertising than was ever before published in any magazine, printed at any time, in any country, at any price. Its January issue contains about the same amount in excess of all previous January numbers of all other magazines. It is this recognition by advertisers that enables The Cosmopolitan to command for its readers the best in Art and Literature that money will buy. And this is why $1.00 a year will secure such a magazine.

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It costs a little more, but with chapped hands and clothes weakened by the free alkali in common soaps, the housekeeper soon finds that Ivory Soap is the cheapest in the end.

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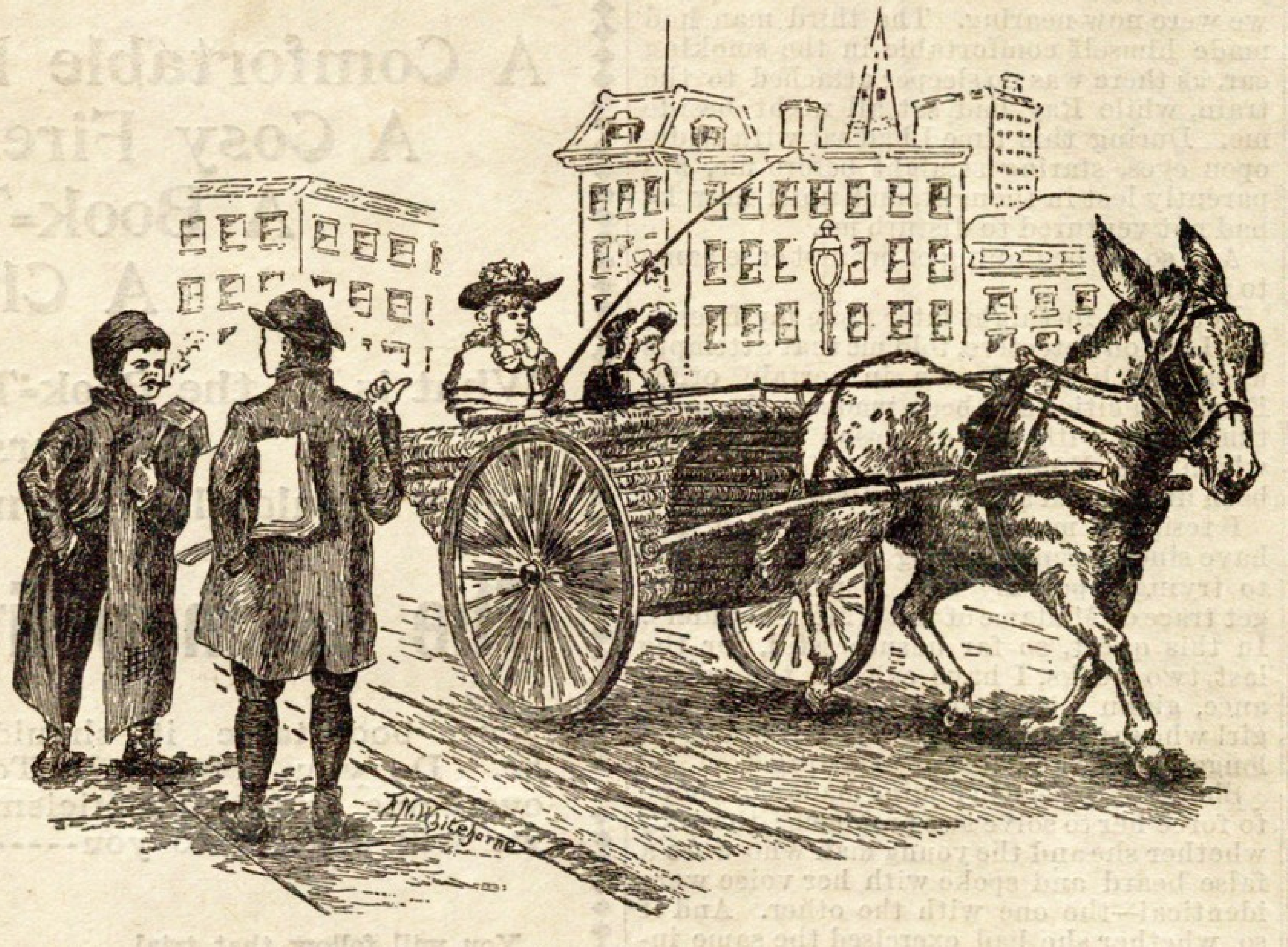
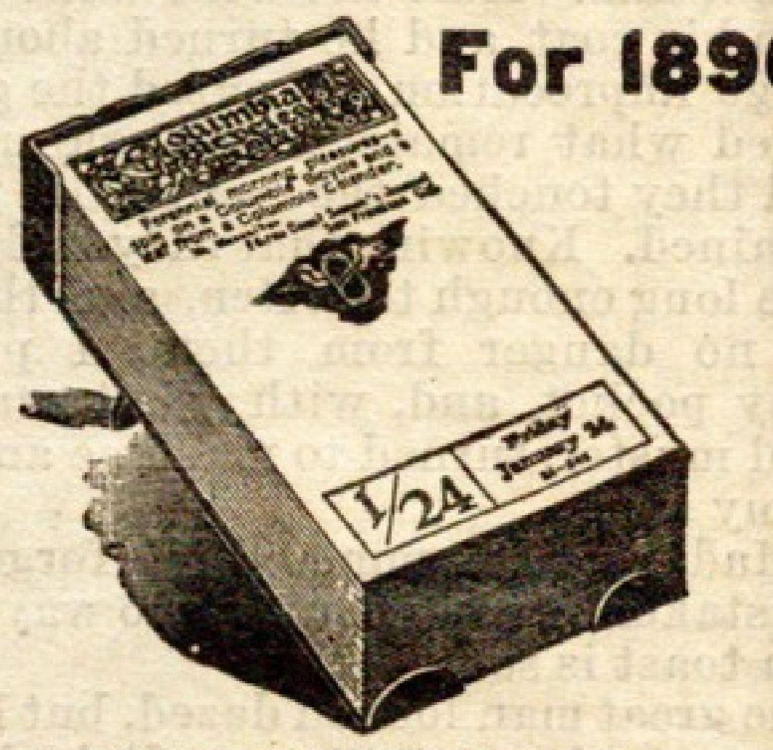


"Say, Jamesy! Look at der little girls in der basket, drivin' demselves home from der wash."

The Columbia Bicycle Pad Calendar For 1896



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Eighty-sixth Annual Exhibit
—OF THE—
HARTFORD FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY,
OF HARTFORD, CONN.
JANUARY 1st, 1896.

Assets.

Cash on hand, in bank, and Cash Items,	$1,088,291 95
Cash in hands of Agents and in course of Transmission,	1,062,719 09
Rents and Accrued Interest,	24,997 45
Real Estate Unincumbered,	385,775 60
Loans on Bond and Mortgage (1st lien),	1,316,000 00
Loans on Collateral Security,	9,800 00
Bank Stock, Hartford, Market Value,	342,650 00
" *New York,* "	322,330 00
" *Boston,* "	77,928 00
" *Albany & Montreal,* "	79,710 00
Railroad Stocks,	755,150 00
State, City, and Railroad Bonds,	3,763,861 00
Total Assets,	$9,229,213 09

Liabilities.

Capital Stock,	$1,250,000 00
Reserve for Re-insuranee,	4,404,238 50
Reserve for all Unsettled Claims,	674,081 08
NET SURPLUS,	**2,900,893 51**
Surplus to Policy-holders,	**4,150,893 51**

Assets—increase,	583,477 47
Re-insurance Reserve—increase,	164,349 75
Net Surplus—increase,	400,546 64
Income—gross,	7,060,163 08

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THOS. TURNBULL, Ass't Secretary.
CHAS. E. CHASE, Ass't Secretary.

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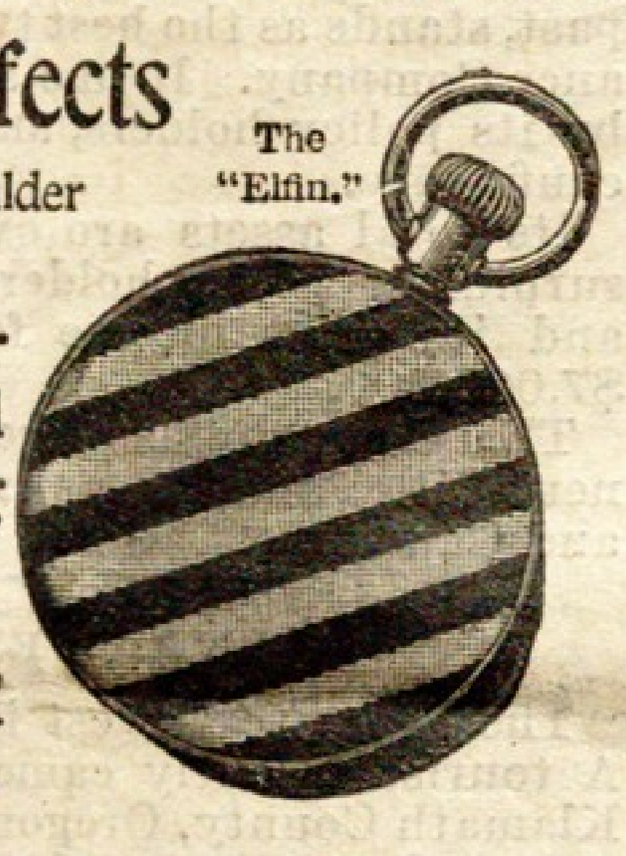

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Charming Shadings in enamel for evening gowns—

light blue, pink, white or crimson. . . . .

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Be sure and get the package with the big **H-O** on the end.

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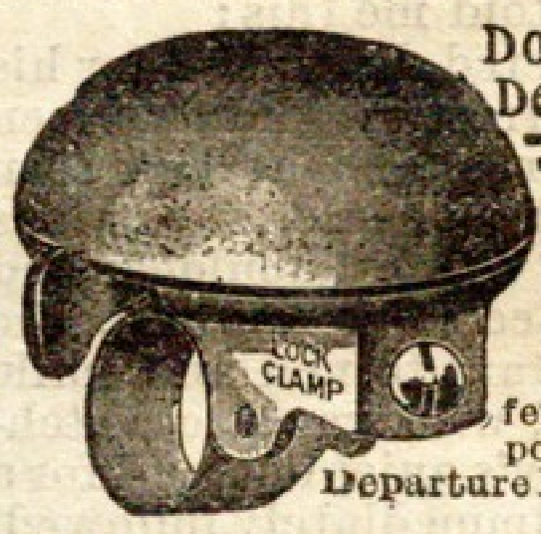

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Dey's ringin' ev'rywhere

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Elegant in Design,
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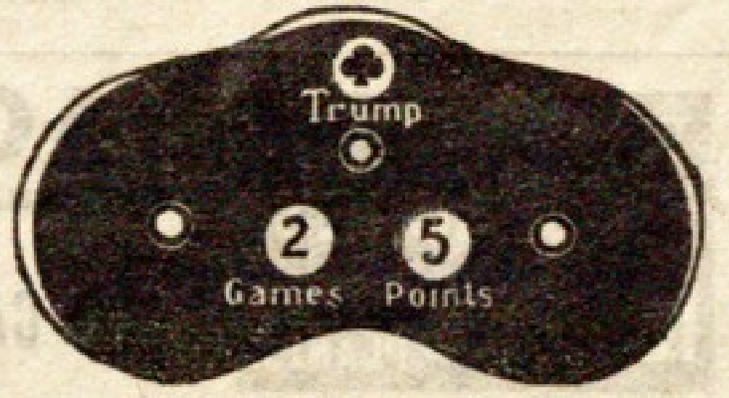

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ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS.
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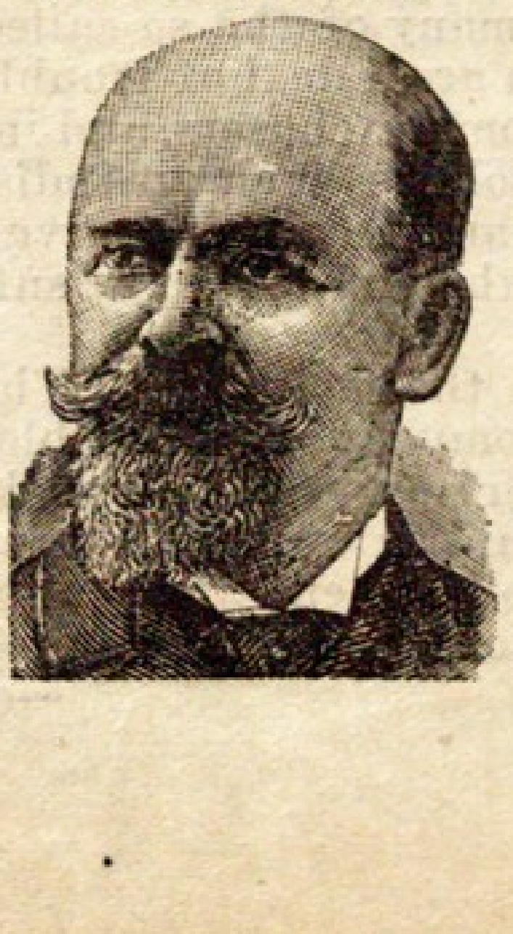

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And a Delicious Remedy for Indigestion and Sea Sickness.
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Originators of
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